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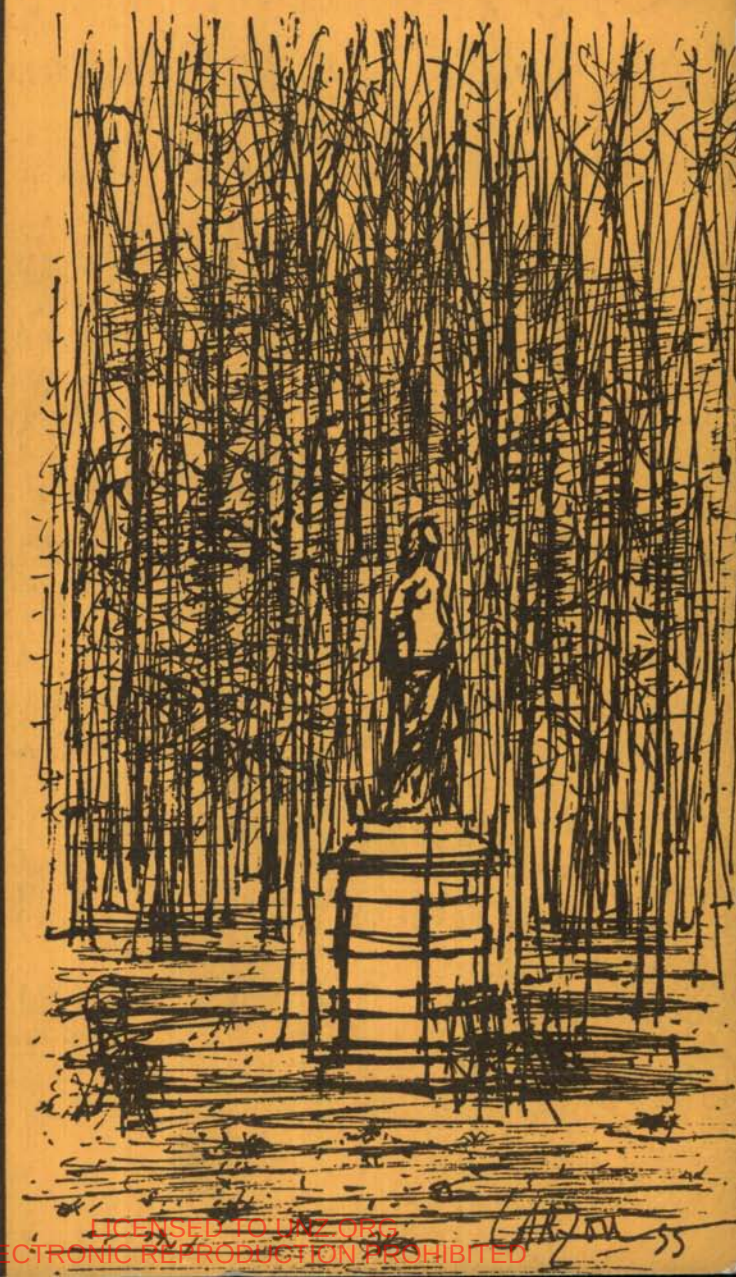

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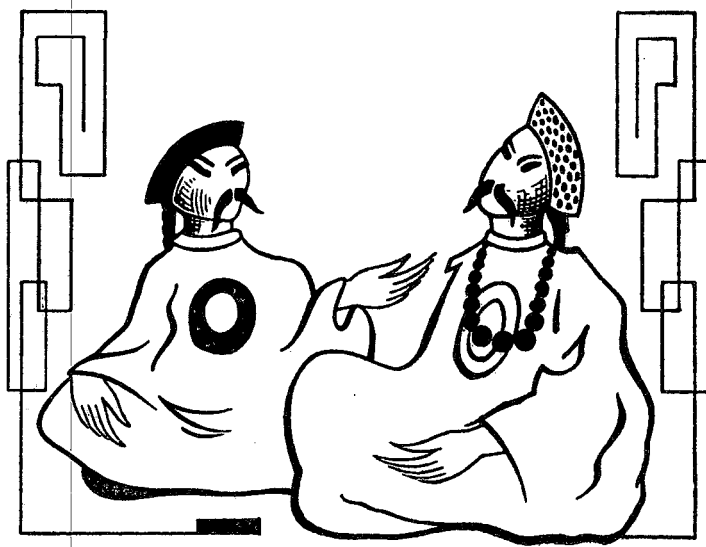

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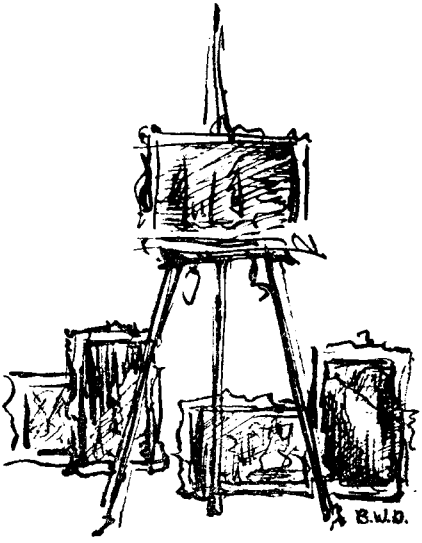

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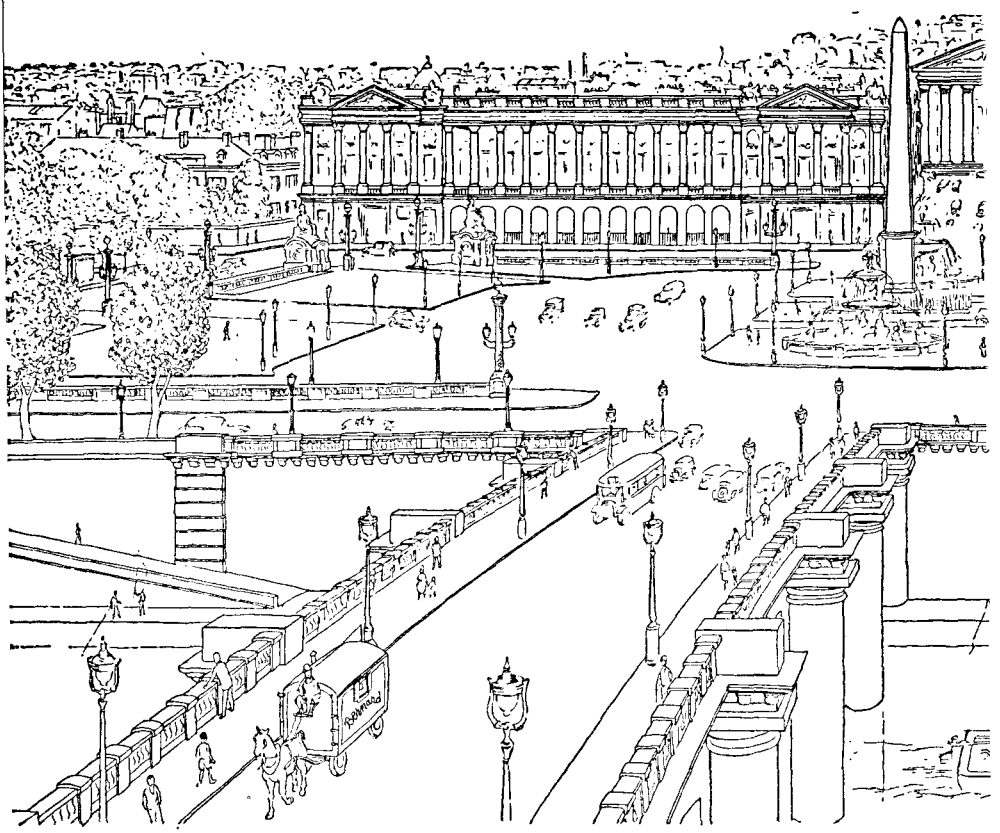

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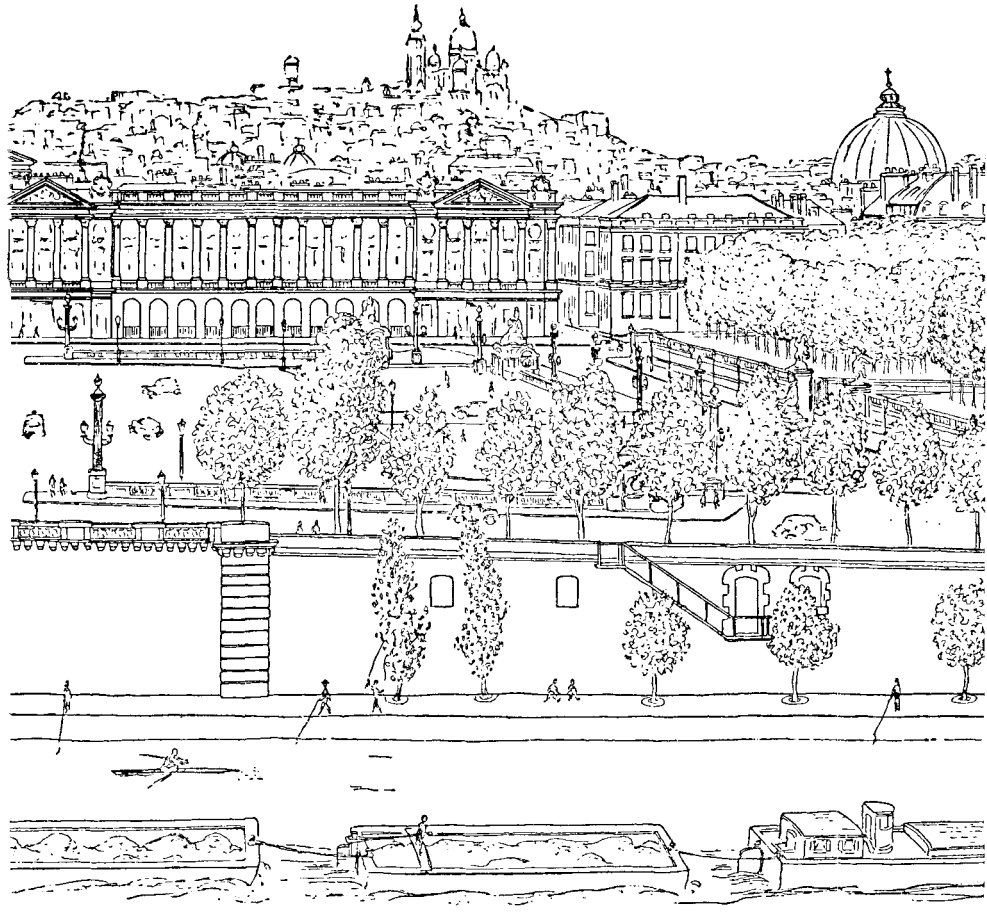

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HATE

THE Temples of Juno and Concordia, brown and wrinkled like the fingers of old men, stand on the hills overlooking the village of Porto Bianco. Where the column meets the cornice, grass grows, as hair out of the noses of the old men in the village beyond. Below, half hidden as if ashamed, rise three slender columns balancing the remains of friezes, all that is left of the Temple of Diascuri.

The sky was blue. The sea was green. The soil was red and parched and the village was a gunpowder grey. Carlo watched his flock spill over a fallen column as he whistled softly to himself. A soft wind arose, rustled past the purple artichoke blooms, whispered through the Temple of Juno. A flutter ran through the flock as the wind blew out to sea. Suddenly Carlo felt an immense love and contentment and he wanted to cry. Instead, he whistled softly, so softly that only a "fffffff ffffffff fffffffff" was heard.

Now Carlo loved his sheep more than he loved any human, for he had spent more time tending the flock than in the village among men. Indeed, Turidrew, the shepherd who tended the flocks of Baron Sicurella, was the only person with whom Carlo had ever lived.

Carlo was six when his father and mother were killed in a feud over a piece of land in which had been found rich deposits of sulphur. Carlo's father had refused to accept money to drop his litigation. Nor did the notes signed with a

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crude black hand, threatening his life, dissuade him. No one knew where the offers of money or the notes came from, for they were always delivered by (as the villagers called them) the men with the moustaches.

It happened two days before the village feast to the Virgin Mary. Carlo's father was preparing to ride into the village when two men with red handkerchiefs tied around their faces walked into the house. The first volley caught his mother as she rushed to her husband. The second volley hit Carlo's father as he knelt to his wife crumpled at his feet.

In the evening when the Carabinieri arrived, they found Carlo, squatting on the floor, staring at his dead parents. Now, children have strange ways of thinking, and at six Carlo knew that it had been the Carabinieri who took his mother and father away, and they never came back.

The disputed land was bought by Pepi Porelli and no more was heard of the case. Of course, no one ever found the assassins of Carlo's parents. As for Carlo, he was given to the service of Baron Sicurella. The boy was sent to gain his bread to Turidrew, to help him tend the flocks.

The life of a shepherd is a lonely one, self-incestuous, and breeds a strange race of men. Carlo spent three years in the company of Turidrew. Their conversation in all this time might have filled a paragraph.

Carlo learned to love the solitude of the higher hills and above all, he found a great love for his sheep. If ever the old man and the boy wandered near fields at harvest time, the peasants changed their chant and sang:

> "The shepherd when dressed in silks
> Will still smell of his sheep."

It was a slow, wailing melody that lingered in the air long after it ended. They repeated it until Turidrew and Carlo left. As they wandered away, the peasants bawled, "Baaa... baaa... baaa..." after them for many peasants believe that shepherds are born from sheep and only understand sheep-like sounds.

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When Turidrew died, Carlo was almost ten. He was given the flocks to tend alone. Carlo grew into manhood in solitude, away from men who mocked him. For nine years he tended the flocks, coming down to the village once a month to replenish his stock of bread and wine. Slowly he descended, stopping from time to time, when the sheep found a spot of greenery or shrubs.

Carlo was still whistling quietly when a car came down the road to Segesta, its horn wailing sporadically. As the car approached, it did not slow down, but the horn became more persistent. A flutter ran through the flock. Frightened by the horn, they tried to reach the higher ground across the road. The car quivered as it rammed into the massed sheep. Two lambs crumpled under the chassis. The rest of the flock scattered to the wheat fields. Then it was quiet. The wind rattled the high dry wheat. A sheep bawled.

Carlo seized his staff and rushed to the stalled car, gazing at the two lambs under the wheels, their heads and limbs in grotesque positions. The Carabinieri never left his driver's seat.

"Stinking shepherd! Idiot! Is this how you tend your flocks? Now drag these two beasts from under..."

Carlo cleared his throat and spit in the face of the Carabinieri.

"Assassin!"

The Carabinieri jumped from the car, wiped his face and slapped Carlo's cheeks, the right and then the left, slowly and deliberately.

Carlo tightened his fists around his staff. The blow caught the policeman in the back of the head. Stunned, he fell forward. Carlo stepped aside and again battered his head; three and four times again he clubbed the policeman's skull. On the seventh blow the staff broke.

In Sicily once a man is outside the law he must spend his days in the mountains until he is caught or he is recruited for the Mafia. The months Carlo spent in the hills, alone and hungry, nurtured his hate for men, a quality so necessary for

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leadership among the men of the Mafia. Let it be said, though, that no one speaks of it as such. There are only men with moustaches. Yet the Mafia's story is as old as the island's history. From the time the Greeks drove the Sikels from the shores of Syracuse to the days the Normans scattered the Saracens to the hills beyond Agrigento, the interior of Sicily has always given refuge to such men as Carlo. No race of people had time to bring law and order to the island for there were empires to be built elsewhere, so the men of the hills made a law unto themselves.

Throughout the ages these men have been called by various names—*Camorista*, men of the *Mano Nera*, the *Mafia*. Today if you speak to the people of Porto Bianco of the Mafia they will look at you blankly, for the villagers refer to these men as "those with the moustaches."

Now, Carlo had no moustache, but people pointed to him and said, "There is one of those with the moustache. One of their *rabiati*," which was the villagers' way of saying the "enraged ones."

He rose quickly among the outlaws and only three years after he had bludgeoned to death the Carabinieri he was known to many counts and dukes and bureaucrats of Palermo who used the Mafia for their own ends.

The fishing village of Porto Bianco, not far from Agrigento, was left to Carlo. He collected fees from the wealthy and generally reminded the villagers that the men with moustaches had not forgotten them. Fishing and mining were the chief occupations of the village. Some, though, gained a livelihood from the earth. Not that the owners worked the soil. No. For in the summer they sat in the shade of the village church and in the winter, their black shawls wrapped carefully around their shoulders, they sat in the sun and quoted passages from Dante (only the opening sentences, of course) or wrote verse in Sicilian dialect. The work was done by hired men whom they supervised only during the harvest.

Calidrew Campanella was one of these landowners. His father had left him fifty acres of land, just enough to give him

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the title of "Don" and to allow him to stroll up and down the village square, arm in arm with his friends. "Don" Calidrew was a stout man. His cheeks were fair and lined with fine red veins that swelled and reddened whenever he became angry. His wife's death five years before had left him alone to care for his daughter. Calidrew had thought of remarrying, but fifty acres of land could not support a family, a young girl ready for marriage, and a man of leisure with the title of "Don". And it must be said that since his wife's death his temper had become short.

Calidrew Campanella's daughter, Nicoletta, was tall and sturdy, with strong round flanks. The mule drivers remarked, "Even at seventeen that girl's croup could hold a strong saddle." Her teeth were even, strong and white. The women of the village scoffed at Nicoletta, the "great lady", as they called her, who owned and used a toothbrush. When she smiled her teeth seemed to bite at some imaginary fruit. Calidrew's friends had often counselled him to marry her off as soon as possible. "She is a spirited girl. You had better saddle her early," they advised.

One day Carlo came into the village to collect 300 lire due to the men in Palermo. He came with two men sent to him six months before to help him collect money. They were Marco, *Loo Facitostou*, a little man, dark like the ripe olives in September. No matter what he did or what took place, his face never lost its numb and bored look. And there was *Loo Gatratzou*, which was the villagers' way of calling him "the big ugly rooster." The men of the village said he loved to be cruel to women. Carlo had little trouble collecting the 300 lire. Before leaving the village, Carlo and his men went to drink wine.

The winehouse was just opposite the home of Nicoletta. It was a fine summer day and near the door of the winehouse a table and chairs were put in the sun. Nicoletta was washing the family laundry in a washtub made from half a wine barrel. All afternoon Carlo drank. He did not speak to his comrades. He stared at Nicoletta. He saw her flanks quiver as she walked into the house. He gulped his wine.

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When she returned, he stared at her thighs draped in a wet muslin skirt.

That evening Carlo came with his two comrades and serenaded beneath Nicoletta's window. It was a warm night. The guitar sounded sad. Nicoletta cried and Carlo sang: "If I go to heaven and you're not there... I won't enter... I won't enter..." It was a chant like the peasants sing in the fields.

From that evening onward Carlo came often to sing beneath her window. The village knew of it. They talked. This went on for three months. Carlo sang and Nicoletta cried. There was nothing that passed between them. But Calidrew decided it was time to marry Nicoletta.

Giuliano Porelli, the son of Pepi Porelli, the sulphur mine owner, was chosen as Nicoletta's future husband. It had all been arranged between the fathers. Pepi was a man who had hoped his son would carry on his fortune and name.

Giuliano's mother had died two years after his birth; years spent mostly in bed as life flowed from her. Often Giuliano was put in bed with his mother. She would kiss and fondle him for hours until she was so weakened the maid would take the child from her. One day, when Giuliano was in bed with his mother, she died. The maid was frightened and the boy cried for hours until the father came to force the dead mother's arm off the wailing child, as a black fly darted around the corners of the dead woman's open mouth. Often, in later life, Giuliano thought of the day in a vague sensation that had an image, a sentiment, and a texture which was soft and humid, as if moistened by tears. He never remembered his mother living. He remembered her dead, with a black fly darting around a black hole in her face.

He grew up to be a frail, short young man. Nervous, the people of the village said. "You read too much," his father would say, and would take him hunting. Until one day the boy saw his father end the life of a hare he had wounded, and the boy cried in front of the whole hunting party.

"He is too nervous, Pepi. Don't mind. He is a man of letters."

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Pepi sent Giuliano to Rome to finish his studies. He was to be a lawyer. Yet after two years he returned to the village where one saw him rarely thereafter. Indeed, there were many rumors: He had gotten into some sort of trouble in Rome. Some villagers said he had gone crazy. Others said he had made a woman pregnant. The story that the maid of Pepi Porelli told was believed by most of the people of the village. She said that Giuliano had challenged a man who had abandoned a young pregnant woman, known to Giuliano for her kindness and beauty. The man, and here the maid would whisper, was killed and soon after Giuliano was gripped by a *melancholia.* He had cried for days and refused food. The doctors had advised a complete rest and a return to his family. With time, they said, he would recover. Yet old Pepi did not believe in his son's recovery. He now looked at Nicoletta's strong thighs and knew that only from her loins could a name be sprung to care for his fortune and his name.

When Carlo heard that Nicoletta's father had betrothed her, he drank three bottles of red Sicilian wine and then came to sing under her window, She cried and when he heard her sobs, he clawed up the wall and into her room. He seized her. He stroked her hair. He sucked the tears from the crevice of her nose. She quivered in his arms. He uncovered her body. She stood naked. She trembled as if her body were one large breast palpitating in the warm hand of its lover. Carlo kissed her gently and left her throbbing, her body moist and warm with tears. He felt as if the crime were already committed, why consumate the act.

Nicoletta cried until the cock crowed and the peasants left to till the fields.

Carlo no longer came to serenade Nicoletta. The village said he had forgotten her.

The day of the wedding Carlo was on the road for Palermo. No one thought of Carlo. It was a warm spring day. The orange trees were in blossom and the air was heavy and sweet. The young girls cried and did not know why. The young men were sullen and still.

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The wedding was to take place at six in the evening. The women of the village dressed Nicoletta in a white gown in which her mother and grandmother had been dressed the day of their marriage. At 5:30 in the evening the groom left his home followed by his family and relatives. A few minutes later Nicoletta left for the church with her cortege. The church stood upon a hill. It watched over the terraced village that seemed to spill from the mountain top and trickle into the bay crowded with fishing boats rocking in the wind.

Slowly both groups walked up the long steps that led to "La Chiesa de San Giuliano." The children of the village followed, shouting, "Long life to the married ones!"

The groom and his cortege entered the church first where Father Carducci, the marriage contract under his arm, was waiting for them. Father Carducci, the village priest, was a little man, dressed in a gravy-stained cassock and his breath as usual smelled of wine. It must be said that the produce of the little Father's vineyards was known as far as Palermo. The making and indeed the sampling of wines was his passion. His spare moments were spent in supervising every stage of the process of wine-making. He was a simple man and scorned those complicated priests from Agrigento whom he called the "poets." "Keep occupied and Jesus will take care of the rest," he would say. So he cultivated his vine and cared for his wine barrels and encouraged all in the village to marry young and have many children. The bachelors over twenty-seven he sneeringly called "capons."

As Giuliano signed the marriage papers, Father Carducci patted him gently on the back. "And next year we'll baptize your child."

In a few minutes they were in front of the altar. The guests crowded up to the altar, some even behind the priest. They wanted to hear all. When Father Carducci blessed them, the organ began to play and it was finished. The two groups left the church united. They walked through the streets among cries of "Long life!" "Many children!" They were applauded by everyone as they walked through the streets of Porto Bianco.

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It was 8 p. m. when they reached Gardini's tavern, close to the bay. Only the large drinking mug hanging above the door distinguished it from the other houses clinging to the rocky shoreline. A wedding in Porto Bianco is a joyous time.

Inside the tavern everything had been prepared for the wedding feast. Benches and tables lined the wall. Just opposite the entrance was the table of the bride and groom, covered with a tablecloth of white muslin. The other tables were bare except for the large pitchers and mugs evenly placed at intervals of three feet. The floor was of dirt. The rectangle formed by the benches and tables was the dance floor.

In the adjoining room the food was being prepared. Two lambs were roasting on the spits. In the oven a dozen split heads of lambs were simmering in their juices (*capozzeli*, the villagers called them). Caldrons of lentils and *ciceri* beans were boiling, spiced with olive oil, pepper, salt and onions. Pyramids of crisp meatballs stood waiting to be served. Three huge barrels of wine, one of white and two of red, had been brought up from the cellar. It was warm in the tavern. It smelled of wine and spices and freshly baked bread.

The musicians—a guitar, clarinet, accordion and trumpet—struck up the march from "Aïda." The wedding procession rushed into the tavern. The feast began. The daughters of Gardini, the tavern owner, served. They could not, no matter how fast they ran, keep the pitchers filled. First they brought out the lentils and *ciceri* beans. Everyone ate from a common dish, but drank from his own wine mug. The older men proposed toasts to the future of the newlyweds. The guests snapped back their heads and soon "saw the bottom of their wine mugs," as the villagers say. The appetites of the guests so whetted, the girls brought in the *capozzeli*. Each person was given half a lamb's head. The room was soon filled with a low rumble of gnawing as the guests picked out the brains, then nibbled at the crisp meat that clung to the jaw bones. There was loud smacking of lips after each gulp of wine. Only when some one hollered, "Hurrah! Long

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life to the newlyweds!" did the regaling group remember Nicoletta and her husband.

When one of the serving girls gave the last turns to the lambs roasting on the spits, the dancing began. The children were chased off the floor as the older people all shouted, "Make way for the newlyweds!"

The bride and groom waltzed three times around the dirt floor and then the guests all joined in. Everyone was dancing. Only the elder people sat among the wine-stained tables and smiled, as their feet tapped out the music and their canes swayed in a *one-two-three*. The children, barefooted, danced mimicking their elders until it turned into wrestling and a thin man, still chewing his food, slapped them and frowned. He turned smiling to his partner, satisfied at having punished the child intruder into his adult world. When the waltz could not be played any faster, the old people called, "*Na tarantella*" "*Na tarantella*" The women kicked off their shoes and sent them tumbling under the tables. The men billowed their shirts as sweat poured down from their armpits. Suddenly the music started. The dancers scurried to their places and the dance began. The floor was crowded. The dancers kicked up the pebbles and dirt and sent them flying against the empty chairs. The old spectators now began to clap their hands in time with the music. In a few minutes one or two dancers flopped into the empty chairs, their hearts pounding, their throats dry. The music became faster. Feet thumped the ground, hands clapped, feet stamped, until the whole tavern seemed to throb and pound in time with the music. Soon only six people were left. The women's hair were matted to their temples. The men were drenched in sweat. Their shirts clung to their bodies. The clarinet player pointed his instrument to the ceiling, brought it down in one, short, sharp wail, and the dance ended, amidst laughter, signs of relief and a general uproar.

Outside the village, rocked by the gait of the mule, Carlo thought of Nicoletta, her father and the *rimbambito*, that infant-like idiot, Giuliano, who was marrying Nicoletta.

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Only the occasional twitch of his left shoulder indicated his rage. He thought of the scene he had often imagined and it made his blood pound close to his ears. Carlo would always speak first.

"Signor Campanella, I have come to ask you an important question."

Nicoletta's father smiled and his loose, fat lips parted and exposed yellow teeth, stained green near the gums.

"What is it, dear Carlo?"

"It is this, *caro*. Each man has his way of tending his flock. My life, you know it well. I am respected by many. Many fear me. You know though that I have friends who are well placed in Palermo."

Calidrew turned his back to Carlo and stiffled a jeer.

"I am speaking to you!"

"Speak, dear Carlo."

"I know that my situation... Look, Calidrew, I ask the hand of your daughter in marriage."

At this point Nicoletta's father would laugh.

"You, *caro* Carlo? You want to marry, and my daughter! What can you bring me? The police from Palermo? Or the troops from Rome? You are of those of the moustache. And you want to marry!"

Here Calidrew faded away, no matter how hard he tried to keep him in his imagination, for Carlo wanted the image to remain, to strike at it, to pound it senseless. But the image always melted away slowly, like an echo. These thoughts made him rage and his left shoulder worked up and down as if something irritated him.

Suddenly Carlo began to hunch his shoulder. He pulled his mule around.

"Come, we are going to the wedding."

His comrades did not question him. They turned their mules around and followed.

Carlo arrived in the midst of the feverish tarantella. He entered with the same two men who had serenaded with him under Nicoletta's window. The arrival of the three men with the moustaches quieted the feasting people for a moment, but

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soon the lambs were brought in on huge platters and quickly the uproar continued.

Carlo and his two men sat on an outside bench, their feet stretched on to the dance floor.

The timid people trotted in front of Carlo. "*Buona sera,* Carlo." They felt good to be associated, even in such a small way, with a man the village considered important. The villagers less timid waved to Carlo and smiled. The hardy or the fools ignored Carlo.

Nicoletta's father waved to Carlo, not bothering even to get up. Giuliano, the groom, ignored Carlo. Carlo and his comrades sat quietly and drank their wine, pitcher after pitcher.

The dancing soon began again. Nicoletta danced with each of the men (the farewell dance, as the villagers called it.) Carlo watched. Nicoletta danced and his nostrils flared. He smiled, but his eyes were flecked with anger. He stared at Nicoletta's father. He hated him. When Nicoletta's husband walked by, he slammed his palm on his shoulder and congratulated him. The poor man smiled humbly and quickly walked away. Carlo laughed. He hated.

Nicoletta whirled around the room with any man who asked. As she came by Carlo, Carlo casually put up his hand in such a way that her buttocks brushed up against his palm. Some of the people stopped talking. When Nicoletta danced around once again, Carlo brushed his hand up her thigh.

In the crowded, smoky room, no one spoke. The orchestra played. Nicoletta and her partner whirled around, kicking pebbles up against the wall. The band played. Carlo picked up a pitcher of wine and laughed. With both hands he brought it to his lips. Everyone watched. He finished the liter of wine. He tossed the pitcher under the tables and walked towards Nicoletta. The band stopped its playing. No one spoke. Carlos walked across the dirt floor.

"Nicoletta, *cara,* may I have this dance?"

He swayed just for a moment. He stiffened as Nicoletta smilingly walked into his arms. The band had been watch-

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ing so intently that they started to play only when Carlo glared at them.

No one else danced. Carlo angrily slammed Nicoletta against him and shuffled slowly across the floor. The band played a fast waltz. Carlo shuffled around the room slowly. No one spoke and the music sounded sharp and off-key.

As the couple danced, "Don" Calidrew's left eye flickered and twitched and he stared from his wine to Carlo whose hand now slid from Nicoletta's back to her thick, strong thigh. Nicoletta had drunk two pitchers of wine, her head was filled with excitment. She did not notice Carlo's hands as they caressed her.

"Who has put the evil eye upon this wedding?" an old one-breasted woman wailed. "Evil eye. Evil eye. Must we have death?"

No one listened to her—no one wanted to.

Pepi, the groom's father, stepped into the square. He turned Carlo around and pressed a packet into his hands.

"Now please leave."

Carlo slapped wildly at Pepi's hand and sent a shower of lira bills fluttering into the air. They made a "flic-flic" sound as they hit the ground.

Carlo stumbled and laughed as he brought his hand to the breast of Nicoletta who even in the midst of the festivities smelled of strong soap and the breath of a child close to its mother's nipple. As Carlo's hand lingered on her breast everyone looked to the groom, Giuliano. He smiled at everyone around him but did nothing.

Suddenly, Calidrew, Nicoletta's father, spit on the floor, smashed a plate of lentils against the wall and hollered, "*Carognia!* Son of a pig! We shall teach you to act as a gentleman!"

He rushed on to the dance floor, caught Carlo by his belt, pulled him away from his daughter, and rammed his palm across Carlo's face. Four seconds before the blow flew, the band stopped, the woman stopped her wailing. The slap sounded like the crash of cymbals. They all knew that Calidrew had performed an act upon which his life fluttered.

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And the eyes of Carlo were like an endless, infinite sea of hate.

Loo Gatratzou and *Facitostou* both rushed towards Calidrew, their knives making a dull clicking sound as the long blades flicked out, like the tongues of dogs in heat. Calidrew wanted to cry, for he felt weak, helpless and because for a moment he had dared to be strong. Now he felt naked and he dared not cover himself and must feel proud of his nakedness. Calidrew in the crowded hall stood alone. No one spoke. The children were hushed by the adult anger and hate they felt in the room.

Nicoletta screamed, "Carlo, *per l'amore di Dioï* Are you crazy?"

Perhaps it was Nicoletta. Perhaps it was Carlo's desire to prolong the moment which made Carlo seize the arm of *Loo Gatratzou.*

"Wait, *caro mio.* You, Calidrew, you will wait also. Think and wait."

Carlo pushed his two comrades out of the room. He smiled, patted Nicoletta on the cheek, and walked quickly out of the room. The door slowly swung shut and clicked. The wedding was over.

After Carlo left, Calidrew ran into the kitchen, sobbing. No one followed him. Shortly the music started but no one danced. Instead, in small groups, they began to leave, until the room was empty. The kitchen was still warm and smoky. Underneath the tables lay broken bits of plates and the well-gnawed heads of lambs. On the table still lay the half eaten lambs, the fat now solidified, white and waxen.

Calidrew sat in the warm kitchen alone. He cursed the Lord and cursed himself for having slapped Carlo.

"It's Nicoletta's fault. The little animal!" He jumped to his feet. "She should have been beaten senseless. She just was not beaten enough. Oh, Jesus, come to my aid!"

He brought his hand to his mouth and he bit sharply at his knuckles as he sobbed. His body shook and the tears were salty in his mouth. Calidrew crossed himself and walked into the night. Just outside, Guiliano, still in his

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black suit but with a shawl thrown over his shoulders, was waiting for him.

"Giuliano, what are you doing here? Where is Nicoletta?"

"She is at my home. She is... will be safe. I have come to see you home."

Calidrew was glad to see Giuliano, in spite of his protests that he should be home with his wife.

Giuliano took Calidrew by the arm and the two men walked up the slope, as the wind shook the loose lanterns and made the shadows tremble and scurry for darker places.

Giuliano did not tell Calidrew that he was carrying a short shotgun under his shawl, nor did he tell him that Carlo had not left the village. He had seen him talking with his comrades at *la barouna*, a square not far from the tavern.

The moon had gone down and the streets were dark, except for the two parallel streets that ran from the shore to the crest of the village.

The side streets were dark and with doors that were barred.

Calidrew and Giuliano walked silently up Via Cavour, one of the lighted streets. Their heavy shoes thudded dully on worn cobblestones as a mottled cat slithered home, hugging the cube-like houses that lined the streets. It was the hour when the cats of the village sought their pleasure. But that night all was still, not even a donkey brayed.

"It is quiet, is it not, Giuliano?"

"Yes, but you know what the peasants sing:

'Flicker, flicker little lanterns
Light my way to my parents...'"

Calidrew laughed, an empty laughter filled with tears.

Briskly a man stepped out of one of the side streets near the top of the slope and posted himself beneath the swaying lamp.

Both men stopped.

"It does not matter," said Giuliano. "We shall cross over to Via Orologia. It is lighted also."

The two men turned into the dark side street. Only the

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home of Father Carducci showed a light. From behind the darkened homes came the stuttering of wings and the stamping of a mule's feet clanking on a dirt floor, tormented, even at this hour, by the merciless flies.

The two men quickly, silently, walked in the dark way towards the lighted street. They were just beyond Father Carducci's home when two men slowly turned the corner ahead and posted themselves beneath the lamp. Calidrew turned and started to run back. When he had run again just past Carducci's house, Carlo appeared at the corner, sitting on a mule. Calidrew ran to Father Carducci's and pounded on the door.

He sobbed, "For the love of God, open! Open!"

Giuliano retreated, his back to the door, as *Loo Gatratzou* advanced slowly from Via Orologia and as Carlo led the mule into the dark street from the right.

"There is some one at the door, Carducci," Santa, the priest's mother yelled from her bedchamber.

The good Father was in the wine cellar, sampling last year's vintage. He dipped a long red hose into a barrel, sucked hard at the pipe, swallowed the mouthful of wine and then let the red liquid pour into a huge wicker-covered bottle.

"Some one is at the door."

Giuliano flicked his shawl over his shoulder and brought his gun to his armpit. He fired. The machine-gun trembled in Carlo's lap as the bullets nailed Giuliano and Calidrew to the door. *Loo Gatratzou* screeched, "*Porca Madonna*" He reached for his stomach.

For a moment it was silent.

"Carducci, Carducci, are you all right?" screamed the priest's mother. "Assassins are in the streets again!"

The good Father remained in the cellar tasting his wine. He knew there was nothing to be done. No light appeared in the street. No one came to an even darkened window. Men moved closer to their wives and pretended to sleep.

In the street Calidrew and his new son-in-law lay dead, their blood flowing in the gritty grey streets. *Loo Gatratzou*

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moaned, sitting in a pool of blood and horse manure.

Carlo flopped off his mule, pulling a dagger from his belt. He ripped the blouse off the corpse of Calidrew and dug the knife deep into Calidrew's breast four times.

It was not until dawn that Father Carducci opened the door of his home. Calidrew's body fell, almost into the arms of the priest. Where his breast met his shoulder there was carved as if by four punctures, an *M*, small, small as a nine-inch knife can write.

Hate makes some write small: hate that flares the nostrils and constricts the teeth, vaporizes the blood upward. There must have been hate before love, for love is but a reflection of hate. Did Eve hate Adam or was it God that hated man? There are no benefactors of man, but God how many malfactors. If Christ had truly loved, would His cross blaze in darkened fields? A mother in birth pangs screams, "You shall never touch me again, bastard" and the burning coals of hatred reflect love for a lifetime.

Hate and so love. Hate until the bowels tremble and the nostrils flare, until reason is gone and the blood is vapor and flows as tears of rage. Hate until the soul is soiled and chancre-like, until it shrivels and rots. Hate, hate, for there is death and love. Hate and live. Love and die. Hate your fellow man and love the beast. Hate my God and love all gods, then in His warm embers of hatred rest for eternity. Love my devil and love all devils, and then rest in the cold ashes of love. Love and remain among the humble. Hate and soar above in red flaming skies.

Just outside the village, in the hills that cradle it, Carlo rode toward the dark and high mountains and he felt loved, soothed and infinitely closer to God. He whistled softly and all that was heard was a low"ffffffff... ffffffff... fffffffff..."

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SEQUENCE IN VENICE

Dedication

You were also there: I can't
Detach the place from what you meant.
Beneath my hands the earth is felt,
Within my mind the landscape built.
Something is missing. Add it. You
Were something essential there, a true
Gauge of my feeling, an event.

I. INTRODUCTION TO A LANDSCAPE

Difficult not to see significance
In any landscape we are charged to watch,
Impossible not to set all seasons there
Fading like movements in a music one
To other, slow spring into the fast rage
Of summer that takes possession of a place
Leaving the residue of time to autumn
Rather than just a used and ravished landscape.

And never long able to see the place
As it must be somewhere itself beyond
Any regard of the ecstatic gazer
Or any human attitude of mind,

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We blame all human happiness or grief
Upon a place, make figures of our feeling
And move them, as a story-teller might
Move modern heroes into ancient legends,
Into the solid and acceptable land.

For who can keep a grief as pure grief
Or hold a happiness against the heart?
Noble indeed to impute our worthiest thoughts
To a serene and splendid countryside
And therefore logical to let our loathing
See a storm looming in the summer light,
The hills about to learn of landslides and
The entire landscape be quite swallowed up
In a surrender—a type of our death.

II. FIRST REFLECTIONS

No-one would need to find a logic for
Living within this city; no man need
Have cause to ponder out his livelihood.
In other places far from sun or sea
Even the certain man has had to brood
Upon the nature of his certainty
And think of other ways to live instead.

Legends and allegories grow from such
Strong doubt. It is those cities where men look
Within themselves to wonder where they are
That shadows of great histories stir and stretch.
Myths are built up not where men love but where
They feel most ill at ease. Our fables reach
Back to the places where our hearts could break.

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III. IN VENICE

Always enter Venice at night-time.
This is a city that you need not bare
To sun or fashion into pure idea.
Adorn it as you will, sing it or rhyme
The rhythms of its waters—it's the same.

Other places need to be pared down
To their simplicity. An act of will
Is necessary to keep them pure and whole,
(Florence is one example out of many).
But Venice asks adornment. Pile on any
Wishes or dreams you may, she still
Stares firmly from the water she floats on.

But do not stay too long.
Follow the paths towards the open sea
Or step back to the mainland finally
Else you may find your grasp of self not strong
Against this chance to add, to decorate.
You cannot take like stone an abstract weight.
Venice puts shadows round simplicity.

IV. THE ROOM

This is a room where we can live on our hopes
And not be shamed into acquiescence with splendour.
The shutters are drawn on grandeur as on sleep
And you my dear,
May think of the letter that will never come

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While I release myself into a poem.
Here no light once drawn through water gropes
Between familiar thoughts. Far down below
A human argument
Is quite in its own element
And we can argue too.

Peace seemed attainable before we came.
We thought mere sight of splendour would remove
Us from our thoughts and shift us into peace,
But now this room, this street say no—
That however far our physical travels go
We still return to old ideas, old love,
Our characters still ragged, out at elbow,
With Venice, the world, so near yet so cast off.

V. THE ISLANDS. MURANO

Raging and red but not at all like sun.
Sun lets all colours have their way with it
But this is fire, is hot against the face
And sends us back abruptly from its heat.
O miracle indeed that from a furnace
Something so light, so cool should come as glass.

And we, so apt at imagery, compare
The poem's making with this wrought, spun stuff.
The image will not carry far;
We need to tame our violence not let
It have its will. The poem that
Leaps from immediate rage of passion, from fire,
Loses itself in its own heat.

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But watch these men, observe their concentration.
The fire rages but they are quite calm.
Study the way they make not what they make.
This is the other, the wiser side of passion
That takes what fire has done and gives it shape—
An ugly ornament, a drinking-cup—
The sole thing constructed from a flame.

VI. THE ISLANDS. TORCELLO

Here you may find the purest style, a way
To be direct. This little island floating
On the same sea where Venice preens herself
Is island only, smells of sea and soil:
The style is in the toil,
Seamen with boat or farmer with his hay.
All is an action, nothing merely waiting.

Words would come easily and aptly here.
There is no grandeur to disturb
The mind, no squares where ourselves disappear
Into a sense of wonder. Here we may
Partake of the particular
And put all generalities away.

Soil, salt and peasants with one tower to ride
The sky—and this is all.
Calmly our statements step away,
Substance and form elide.
Nothing of symbol's here, no rhetoric,
Yet we who are obsessed with what we make
Everything mean, yes even here compile
Torcello an archetype, a new and simpler style.

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VII

PIAZZA SAN MARCO. THE MYSTICS AND MAKERS

Now they return to the one world we know
And do you recognize this man who comes
Rubbing the marble flakes between his fingers,
Pulling a splinter from his thumb? Are you
Prepared to welcome him to this one place
Which we, for lack of closer truth, declare
Is common ground for every one of us?

Mystics and sculptors come together here:
One feels a vision fading from his mind
And needs renewal from this downward world;
The other so collected round his carving
Is still withdrawn. Then bring him back to life—
Wine and the dusty sandal and our talk.

We, questioning ourselves, never believe
Entirely in a world that we can share.
Our characters, our faiths are where we move
Alone; yet we must act as if there were
A common ground if only fashioned of
Sun and a square deserted by the noon.
O put your hand on what the world is made of—
Water and dust . Let the creators take
Their time off here among this kindly chaos:
Let there at least be some way to return.

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VIII. LAST REFLECTIONS

Now in this different perspective see
Another side of Italy.
Can you believe that history occurred
Within those squares, upon that sea
With you no witness there delightedly?
Turn to the books upon the shelf, the word
Of conquerors and kings who have not stirred.

Merely to beckon your imagination.
See them in cold print now and watch their wars
Solemnly marching through the pages' progress.
Nothing can meet these things except the mind
Since you have left the five senses behind,
Put Italy into its proper past
Where nothing is diminished or revised.

Now Venice is surrendered to the maps,
The Adriatic falling sheer away
Downward to Greece and Africa;
And pity that your own
Character down so easily on known
Papers or histories. No calm full-stops
Mark us on maps, we are dependent on
Our own ideas or those of friends perhaps.
There is no sign of us where we have been.

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XI. JOURNEY FROM A LANDSCAPE

The colours stay within the mind, the light
Will not so easily permit itself
To be put out. In thoughts once more at home
A foreign fire will gleam, tints taken from
A sail, a wake of water widening out
Or subtle colours that make crumbling buildings
Renew themselves. These we have with us still.

And home again we learn how much we build
Abroad, put roots down in impermanence
Yet waver not from what time drags away
But are drawn too—like colours fading fast,
Like slow canals escaping to the sea.
Rest in this power to adapt, remember
The mind still turns like the huge globe and shows
Now Italy, now England and we are
The axis on which all our journeys move.

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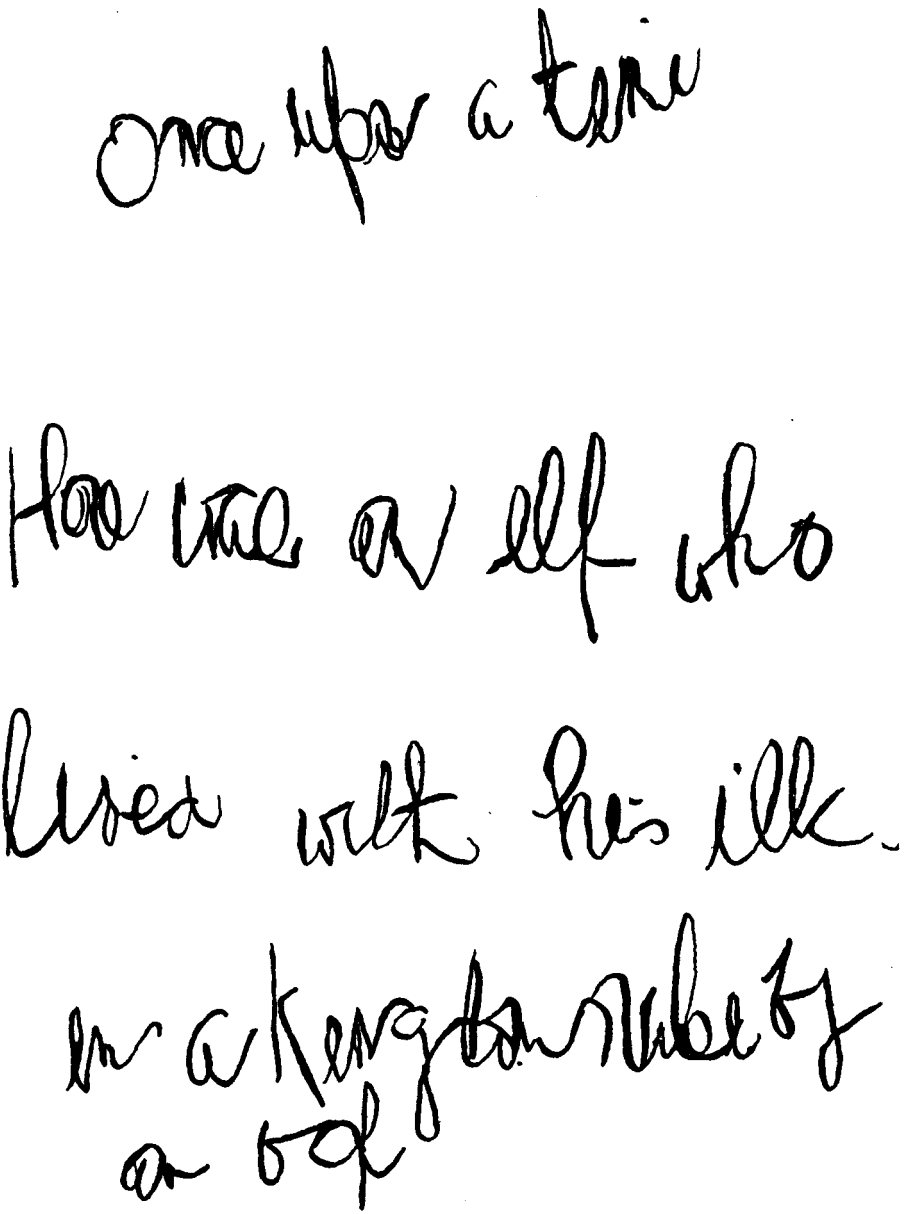

An example, considerably reduced, of a Thurber manuscript page.

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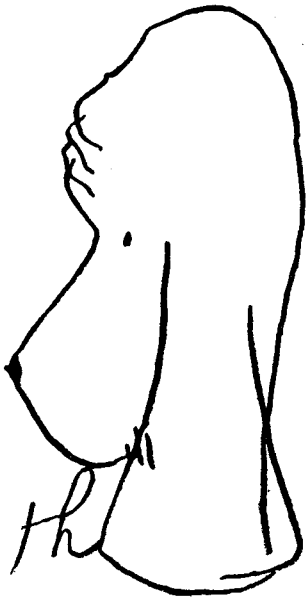

THE ART OF FICTION X

JAMES THURBER

Scene: The Hotel Continental, just down from the Place Vendôme on the Rue Castiglione. It is from here that Janet Flanner (Genêt) sends her Paris letter to *The New Yorker* and it is here that the Thurbers usually stay while in Paris. "We like it because the service is first-rate without being snobbish."

Thurber was standing to greet us in a small salon whose

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cold European formality had been somewhat softened and warmed by well-placed vases of flowers, stacks and portable shelves of American novels in bright dust jackets, and by pads of yellow paper and bouquets of yellow pencils on the desk. Thurber impresses immediately by his physical size. After years of delighting in the shy, trapped little man in the Thurber cartoons and the confused and bewildered man who has fumbled in and out of some of the funniest books written in this century, we, perhaps like many readers, were expecting to find the same frightened little man in person. Not at all. Thurber by his firm handgrasp and confident voice and by the way he lowered himself into his chair gave the impression of outward calmness and assurance. Though his eyesight has almost failed him, it is not a disability which one is aware of for more than the opening minute, and if Thurber seems to be the most nervous person in the room it is because he has learned to put his visitors so completely at ease.

Thurber talks in a suprisingly boyish voice which is flat with the accents of the Mid-West where he was raised, and though slow in tempo, never dull. He is not an easy man to pin down with questions. He prefers to sidestep them, and rather than instruct—he entertains with a vivid series of anecdotes and reminiscences.

Opening the interview with a long history of the bloodhound, Thurber was only persuaded to shift to a discussion of his craft with some difficulty. Here again his manner was typical—the anecdotes, the reminiscences punctuated with direct quotes and factual data. His powers of memory are astounding. In quoting anyone—perhaps a conversation of a dozen years before—Thurber pauses slightly, his voice changes in tone, and you know what you're hearing is exactly as it was said.

* * *

THURBER

Well, you know it's a nuisance—to have memory like mine—as well as an advantage. It's... well... like a whore's top drawer. There's so much else in there that's

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junk... costume jewelry, unneccessary telephone numbers whose exchanges no longer exist. For instance, I can remember the birthday of anybody who's ever told me his birthday. Dorothy Parker—August 22nd, Lewis Gannett—October 3rd, Andy White—July 9th, Mrs. White—September 17th. I can go on with about 200. So can my mother. She can tell you the birthday of the girl I was in love with in the third grade—in 1903. Off hand, just like that. I got my powers of memory from her. Sometimes it helps out in the most extraordinary way. You remember Robert M. Coates? Bob Coates? Well, he was the author of *The Ear of Darkness*, which Ford Madox Ford called the first true Dadaist novel. Well, the week after Stephen Vencent Benét died—Coates and I had both known him—we were talking about Benét. Coates was trying to remember an argument he had had with Benét some 15 years before. He couldn't remember. I said "I can." Coates told me that was impossible since I hadn't been there. "Well," I said, "you happened to mention it in passing about 12 years ago. You were arguing about a play called *Swords*." I was right, and Coates was able to take it up from there. But it's strange to reach a position where your friends have to be supplied with their own memories. It's bad enough dealing with your own.

INTERVIEWERS

Still, it must be a great advantage for the writer. I don't suppose you have to take notes.

THURBER

No. I don't have to do the sort of thing Fitzgerald did with *The Last Tycoon*—the voluminous, the tiny and meticulous notes, the long descriptions of character. I can keep all these things in my mind. I wouldn't have to write down "three roses in a vase", or something, or a man's middle name. Henry James dictated notes just the way that I write. His note-writing was part of the creative act, which is why his prefaces are so good. He dictated notes to see what it was that they might come to.

INTERVIEWERS

Then you don't spend much time pre-figuring your work.

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THURBER

No. I don't bother with charts and so forth. Elliot Nugent, on the other hand, was a careful constructor. When we were working on *The Male Animal* together, he was constantly concerned with plotting the play. He could plot the thing from back to front—what was going to happen here, what sort of a situation would end the first act curtain, and so forth. I can't work that way. Nugent would say: "Well, Thurber, we've got our problem, we've got all these people in the living room. Now what are we going to do with them?" I'd say that I didn't know and couldn't tell him until I'd sat down at the typewriter and found out. I don't believe the writer should know too much where he's going. If he does, he runs into old man blueprint... old man propaganda.

INTERVIEWERS

Is the actual act of writing easy for you?

THURBER

For me it's mostly a question of re-writing. It's part of a constant attempt on my part to make the finished version smooth, to make it seem effortless. A story I've been working on—*The Train on Track Six* it's called—was re-written fifteen complete times. There must have been close to 240,000 words in all the manuscripts put together, and I must have spent 2,000 hours working at it. Yet the finished version can't be more than 20,000 words.

INTERVIEWERS

Then it's rare that your work comes out right the first time.

THURBER

Well, my wife took a look at the first version of something I was doing not long ago and said: "Goddam it, Thurber, that's high-school stuff." I have to tell her to wait until the seventh draft, it'll work out all right. I don't know why that should be so, that the first or second draft of everything I write reads as if it was turned out by a charwoman. I've only written one piece quickly. I wrote a thing called *File and Forget* in one afternoon. But only because it was a series of letters just as one would ordinarily dictate. And

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I'd have to admit that the last letter of the series, after doing all the others that one afternoon, took me a week. It was the end of the piece and I had to fuss over it.

INTERVIEWERS

Does the fact that you're dealing with humor slow down the production?

THURBER

It's possible. With humor you have to look out for traps. You're likely to be very gleeful with what you've first put down, and you think it's fine, very funny. One reason you go over and over it is to make the piece sound less as if you were having a lot of fun with it yourself. You try to play it down. In fact, if there's such a thing as a *New Yorker* style, that would be it—playing it down.

INTERVIEWERS

Do you envy those who write at high speed, as against your method of constant revision?

THURBER

Oh no, I don't, though I do admire their luck. Hervey Allen, you know, the author of the big best-seller *Anthony Adverse*, seriously told a friend of mine who was working on a biographical piece on Allen that he could close his eyes, lie down on a bed and hear the vioces of his ancestors. Furthermore there was some sort of angel-like creature that danced along his pen while he was writing. He wasn't balmy by any means. He just felt he was in communication with some sort of metaphysical recorder. So you see the novelists have all the luck. I never knew a humorist who got any help from his ancestors. Still, the act of writing is either something the writer dreads or actually likes, and I actually like it. Even re-writing's fun. You're getting somewhere, whether it seems to move or not. I remember Elliot Paul and I used to argue about re-writing back in 1925 when we both worked for the *Chicago Tribune* in Paris. It was his conviction you should leave the story as it came out of the typewriter, no changes. Naturally, he worked fast. Three novels he could turn out, each written in three weeks time. I remember

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once he came into the office and said that a 60,000 word manuscript had been stolen. No carbons existed, no notes. We were all horrified. But it didn't bother him at all. He'd just get back to the typewriter and bat away again. But for me—writing as fast as that would seem too facile. Like my drawings, which I do very quickly, sometimes so quickly that the result is an accident, something I hadn't intended at all. People in the arts I've run into in France are constantly indignant when I say I'm a writer and not an artist. They tell me I mustn't run down my drawings. I try to explain that I do them for relaxation, and that I do them too fast for them to be called art.

INTERVIEWERS

You say that your drawings often don't come out the way you intended?

THURBER

Well, once I did a drawing for *The New Yorker* of a naked woman on all fours up on top of a bookcase—a big bookcase—she's up there near the ceilling, and in the room are her husband and two other women. The husband is saying to one of the women, obviously a guest: "This is the present Mrs. Harris. That's my first wife up there." Well, when I did the cartoon originally I meant the naked woman to be at the top of a flight of stairs, but I lost the sense of perspective and instead of getting in the stairs when I drew my line down, there she was stuck up there, naked, on a bookcase.

Incidentally, that cartoon really threw *The New Yorker* editor, Harold Ross. He approached any humorous piece of writing, or more particularly a drawing, not only grimly but realistically. He called me on the phone and asked if the woman up on the bookcase was supposed to be alive, stuffed, or dead. I said: "I don't know, but I'll let you know in a couple of hours." After a while I called him back and told him I'd just talked to my taxidermist who said you can't stuff a woman, that my doctor had told me a dead woman couldn't support herself on all fours. "So, Ross," I said, "she must be alive." "Well then," he said, "What's she doing up there naked in the home of her husband's second wife?" I told him he had me there.

INTERVIEWERS

But he published it.

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THURBER

Yes, he published it, growling a bit. He had a fine understanding of humor, Ross, though he couldn't have told you about it. When I introduced Ross to the work of Peter de Vries, he first said: "He won't be good; he won't be funny; he won't know English." (He was the only successful editor I've known who approached everything like a ship going on the rocks). But when Ross had looked at the work he said, "How can you get this guy on the phone?" He couldn't have said why, but he had that bloodhound instinct. The same with editing. He was a wonderful man at detecting something wrong with a story without knowing why.

INTERVIEWERS

Could he develop a writer?

THURBER

Not really. It wasn't true what they often said of him—that he broke up writers like matches—but still he wasn't the man to develop a writer. He was an unread man. Well, he'd read Mark Twain's *Life on the Mississippi* and several other books he told me about—medical books—and he took the Encyclopedia Brittanica to the bathroom with him. I think he was about up to H when he died. But still his effect on writers was considerable. When you first met him you couldn't believe he was the editor of *The New Yorker* and afterwards you couldn't believe that anyone else could have been. The main thing he was interested in was clarity. Someone once said of *The New Yorker* that it never contained a sentence that would puzzle an intelligent 14 year old or in any way affect her morals badly. Ross didn't like that, but nevertheless he was a purist and perfectionist and it had a tremendous effect on all of us: it kept us from being sloppy. When I first met him he asked me if I knew English. I thought he meant French or a foreign language. But he repeated, "Do you know English?" When I said I did he replied, "Goddamn it, nobody knows English." As Andy White mentioned in his obituary, Ross approached the English sentence as though it was an enemy, something that was going to throw him. He used to fuss for an hour over a comma. He'd call me in for lengthy discussions about the

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Thurber colon. And as for poetic license, he'd say, "Damn any license to get things wrong." In fact, Ross read so carefully that often he didn't get the sense of your story. I once said: "I wish you'd read my stories for pleasure, Ross." He replied he hadn't time for that.

INTERVIEWERS

It's strange that one of the main ingredients of humor—low comedy—has never been accepted for *The New Yorker*.

THURBER

Ross had a neighbor woman's attitude about it. He never got over his Mid-western provincilalism. His idea was that sex is an incident. "If you can prove it," I said, "we can get it in a box on the front page of *The New York Times*." Now I don't want to say that in private life Ross was a prude. But as regards the theater or the printed page he certainly was. For example, he once sent an office memorandum to us in a sealed envelope. It was an order: "When you send me a memorandum with four letter words in it, *seal it*. There are women in this office." I said, "Yah, Ross, and they know a lot more of these words than you do." When women were around he was very conscious of them. Once my wife and I were in his office and Ross was discussing a man and woman he knew much better than we did. Ross told us: "I have every reason to believe that they're *s-l-e-e-p-i-n-g* together." My wife replied: "Why Harold Ross what words you do spell out." But honest to goodness that was genuine. Women are either good or bad he once told me, and the good ones must not hear these things.

Incidentally, I'm telling these things to refresh my memory. I'm doing a short book on him called *Ross in Charcoal*. I'm putting a lot of this stuff in. People may object, but after all it's a portrait of the man and I see no reason for not putting it in.

INTERVIEWERS

Did he have much direct influence on your own work?

THURBER

After the seven years I spent in newspaper writing, it was more E. B. White who taught me about writing, how to clear

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up sloppy journalese. He was a strong influence and for a long time in the beginning I thought he might be too much of one. But at least he got me away from a rather curious style I was starting to perfect—tight journalese laced with heavy doses of Henry James.

INTERVIEWERS

Henry James was a strong influence then?

THURBER

I have the reputation for having read all of Henry James. Which would argue a misspent youth *and* middle-age.

INTERVIEWERS

But there were things to be learned from him?

THURBER

Yes, but again he was an influence you had to get over. Especially if you wrote for *The New Yorker*. Harold Ross wouldn't have understood it. I once wrote a piece called *The Beast and the Dingle* which everybody took as a parody. Actually it was a conscious attempt to write the story as James would have written it. Ross looked at it and said: "Goddam it, this is too literary; I got only 15% of the allusions." My wife and I often tried to figure out which were the 15 % he could have got.

You know, I've occasionally wondered what James would have done with our world. I've just written a piece—*Preface to Old Friends* it's called—in which James at the age of 104 writes a preface to a novel about our age in which he summarizes the trends and complications but at the end is so completely lost he doesn't really care enough to read it over to find his way out again.

That's the trouble with James. You get bored with him finally. He lived in the time of four-wheelers, and no bombs, and the problems then seemed a bit special and separate. That's one reason you feel restless reading him. James is like...well, I had a bulldog once who used to drag rails around, enormous ones—six, eight, twelve foot rails. He loved to get them in the middle and you'd hear him growling out there, trying to bring the thing home. Once he brought

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home a chest of drawers. Without the drawers in it. Found it on an ash-heap. Well, he'd start to get these things in the garden gate, everything finally balanced, you see, and then *crash*, he'd come up against the gate posts. He'd get it through finally, but I had that feeling in some of the James' novels: that he was trying to get that rail through a gate not wide enough for it.

INTERVIEWERS

How about Mark Twain? Pretty much everybody believes him to have been the major influence on American humorists.

THURBER

Everybody wants to know if I've learned from Mark Twain. Actually I've never read much of him. I did buy *Tom Sawyer* but dammit, I'm sorry, I've not got around to reading it all the way through. I told H. L. Mencken that and he was shocked. He said America had produced only two fine novels: *Huck Finn* and *Babbitt*. Of course it's always a matter of personal opinion—these lists of the great novels. I can remember calling on Frank Harris—he was about 70 then —when I was on the Chicago Tribune's edition in Nice. In his house he had three portraits on the wall—Mark Twain, Frank Harris, and I think it was Hawthorne. Harris was in the middle. Harris would point up to them and say, "Those three are the best American writers. The one in the middle is the best." Harris really thought he was wonderful. Once he told me he was going to live to be a hundred. When I asked him what the formula was, he told me it was very simple. He said: "I've bought myself a stomach pump and one half hour after dinner I pump myself out." Can you imagine that? Well, it didn't work. It's a wonder it didn't kill him sooner.

INTERVIEWERS

Could we ask you why you've never attempted a lengthy work?

THURBER

I've never wanted to write a long work. Many writers feel a sense of frustration or something if they haven't, but I don't.

INTERVIEWERS

Perhaps the fact that you're writing humor imposes a limit on the length of a work.

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THURBER

Possibly. But brevity in any case—whether the work is supposed to be humorous or not—would seem to me to be desirable. Most of the books I like are short books: *The Red Badge of Courage, Turn of the Screw,* Conrad's short stories, *A Lost Lady,* Joseph Hergesheimer's *Wild Oranges,* Victoria Lincoln's *February Hill, The Great Gatsby...* you know Fitzgerald once wrote Thomas Wolfe: "You're a putter-inner and I'm a taker-outer." I stick with Fitzgerald. I don't believe, as Wolfe did, that you have to turn out a massive work before being judged a writer. Wolfe once told me at a cocktail party I didn't know what it was to be a writer. My wife, standing next to me, complained about that. "But my husband *is* a writer," she said. Wolfe was genuinely surprised. "He is?" he asked. "Why all I ever see is that stuff of his in *The New Yorker.*" In other words he felt that prose under 5,000 words was certainly not the work of a writer... it was some kind of doodling in words. If you said you were a writer, he wanted to know where the books were, the great big long books. He was really genuine about that.

I was interested to see William Faulkner's list not so long ago of the five most important American authors of this century. According to him Wolfe was first, Faulkner second... let's see, now that Wolfe's dead that puts Faulkner up there in the lead, doesn't it?... Dos Passos third, then Hemingway, and finally Steinbeck. It's interesting that the first three are putter-inners. They write expansive novels.

INTERVIEWERS

Wasn't Faulkner's criterion whether or not the author dared to go out on a limb?

THURBER

It seems to me you're going out on a limb these days to keep a book short.

INTERVIEWERS

Though you've never done a lengthy serious work you have written stories—*The Cane in the Corridor* and *The Whippoorwill* in particular—in which the mood is far from humorous.

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THURBER

In anything funny you write that isn't close to serious you've missed something along the line. But in those stories of which you speak there was an element of anger—something I wanted to get off my chest. I wrote *The Whippoorwill* after five eye operations. It came somewhere out of a grim fear in the back of my mind. I've never been able to trace it.

INTERVIEWERS

Some critics think that much of your work can be traced to the depicting of trivia as a basis for humor. In fact, there's been some criticism...

THURBER

Which is trivia—the diamond or the elephant. Any humorist must be interested in trivia, in every little thing that occurs in a household. It's what Robert Benchley did so well. In fact so well that one of the greatest fears of the humorist writer is that he has spent three weeks writing something done faster and better by Benchley in 1919. Incidentally, you never got very far talking to Benchley about humor. He'd do a take-off on Max Eastman's *Enjoyment of Humor*. "We must understand," he'd say, "that all sentences which begin with W are funny."

INTERVIEWERS

Would you care to define humor in terms of your own work?

THURBER

Well, someone once wrote a definition of the difference between English and American humor. I wish I could remember his name. I thought his definition very good. He said that the English treat the commonplace as if it were remarkable and the Americans treat the remarkable as if it were commonplace. I believe that's true of humorous writing. Years ago we did a parody of *Punch* in which Benchley did a short piece depicting a wife bursting into a room and shouting "The primroses are in bloom"—treating the commonplace as remarkable, you see. In *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* I tried to treat the remarkable as commonplace.

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INTERVIEWERS

Does it bother you to talk about the stories on which you're working? It bothers many writers, though it would seem that particularly the humorous story is polished through re-telling.

THURBER

Oh yes. I often tell them at parties and places. And I write them there too.

INTERVIEWERS

You write them?

THURBER

I never quite know when I'm not writing. Sometimes my wife comes up to me at a party and says, "Dammit, Thurber, stop writing." She usually catches me in the middle of a paragraph. Or my daughter will look up from the dinner table and ask, "Is he sick?" "No," my wife says, "He's writing something." I have to do it that way on account of my eyes. I still write occasionally—in the proper sense of the word—using black crayon on yellow paper and getting perhaps twenty words to the page. My usual method, though, is to spend the mornings turning over the text in my mind. Then in the afternoon, between 2 and 5, I call in a secretary and dictate to her. I can do about 2,000 words. It took me about 10 years to learn.

INTERVIEWERS

How about the new crop of writers? Do you note any good humorists coming along with them?

THURBER

There don't seem to be many coming up. I once had a psychoanalyst tell me that the depression had a considerable effect. Much worse than Hitler and the war. It's a tradition for a child to see his father in uniform as something glamorous—not his father coming home from Wall Street in a three button sack suit saying, "We're ruined," and the mother bursting into tears—a catastrophe that to a child's mind is unexplainable. There's been a great change since the 30's. In those days students used to ask me what Peter Arno did at night. And about Dorothy Parker. Now they

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want to know that my artistic credo is. An element of interest seems to have gone out of them.

INTERVIEWERS

Has the shift in the mood of the times had any effect on your own work?

THURBER

Well, the *Thurber Album* was written at a time when in America there was a feeling of fear and suspicion. It's quite different from *My Life and Hard Times* which was witten earlier and is a funnier and better book. The *Album* was kind of an escape—going back to the Middle West of the last century and the beginning of this, when there wasn't this fear and hysteria. I wanted to write the story of some solid American characters, more or less as an example of how Americans started out and what they should go back to. To sanity and soundness and away from this jumpiness. It's hard to write humor in the mental weather we've had, and that's likely to take you into reminiscence. Your heart isn't in it to write anything funny. In the years 1950-1953 I did very few things, nor did they appear in *The New Yorker*. Now, actually, I think the situation is beginning to change for the better.

INTERVIEWERS

No matter what the 'mental climate', though, you would continue writing.

THURBER

Well, the characteristic fear of the American writer is not so much that as it is the process of aging. The writer looks in the mirror and examines his hair and teeth to see if they're still with him. "Oh my God," he says, "I wonder how my writing is. I bet I can't write today." The only time I met Faulkner he told me he wanted to live long enough to do three more novels. He was 53 then, and I think he *has* done them. Then Hemingway says, you know, that he doesn't expect to be alive after sixty. But he doesn't look forward *not* to being. When I met Hemingway with John O'Hara in Costello's Bar 5 or 6 years ago we sat around and talked about how *old* we were getting. You see it's constantly on the minds of American writers. I've never known a woman who could weep about her age the way the men I know can.

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Coupled with this fear of aging is the curious idea that the writer's inventiveness and ability will end in his fifties. And of course it often does. Carl Van Vechten stopped writing. The prolific Joseph Hergesheimer suddenly couldn't write any more. Over here in Europe that's never been the case. — Hardy, for instance, who started late and kept going. Of course Keats had good reason to write, *When I have fears that I may cease to be Before my pen has glean'd my teeming brain.* That's the great classic statement. But in America the writer is more likely to fear that his brain may cease to glean. I once did a drawing of a man at his typewriter, you see, and all this crumpled paper is on the floor, and he's staring down in discouragement. "What's the matter," his wife is saying. "Has your pen gleaned your teeming brain?"

INTERVIEWERS

In your case there wouldn't be much chance of this?

THURBER

No. I write basically because it's so much fun—even though I can't see. When I'm not writing, as my wife knows, I'm miserable. I don't have that fear that suddenly it will all stop. I have enough outlined to last me as long as I live.

—George Plimpton
Max Steele

(This is the tenth in a series on the Art of Fiction. Authors interviewed have included E. M. Forster, François Mauriac, Graham Greene, William Styron, Irwin Shaw, Alberto Moravia, Joyce Cary, Ralph Ellison, and Georges Simenon.)

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THE BALLAD OF MOTHER AND SON

O tree my mother
Your trunk is old. Green and deep lives your leafy branch
And each green leaf winks its eye
With humming bird, sparrow and lemon finch
O tree my mother
What do you see with all those eyes, old mother?
I see a black albatross hang over my grave and I fear
tomorrow's weather

O fox my mother
Your nose is sharp and you bark so old and wise
Yet you primp and strut in your red fur
And swear you'll wear no other
O fox my mother
What do you prick up your ears for, old mother?
I shudder my son for the hounds and I fear
tomorrow's weather

O clock my mother
The world has a cold in its nose and sits as sad as a stone
Even the south wind has a catarrh
And the moon tells the misery of women
O clock my mother
Why do your teeth chatter so, old mother?
I think the sun wears out, my child, and I fear
tomorrow's weather

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O goose my mother
You stand like a peasant on the webbed feet of the swan
You rail like a fishwife, and yet, my mother
Yours is the white majestic swan feather
O goose my mother
What do you honk at now, old mother?
I saw God like a trout in a creek and I brave
tomorrow's weather

O camel my mother
Your double hump and your tawny serpent head—
Into the fabulous beast of burden
Sainted ass, elk and llama woven
O camel my mother
How will you thread your hump through the needle's eye
old mother?
As I threaded my life through your life, my son, braving
tomorrow's weather

O chimney-pot my mother
You crown my house and roof, your breath though dark is
warm
Up through cold grates of sweating iron
You drew my living fire
O chimney-pot my mother
Why do you darken the sky, old mother?
I darken the sky with my breath, my son, to show up
tomorrow's weather

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O bottle my mother
Three fingers up and three fingers down and only three
fingers more
Of the drink that teases anguish, mother
For the neck is long to pour
O bottle my mother
What if you reach the last drop, old mother?
When I drain the last drop, my son, I'll wait
tomorrow's weather

Captain my mother
Captain my mother
The waves smack at the gull and the sea-wrack tide is full
The sour-cat wave claws the clinker wall
Of the boat that keens the wind
Captain my mother
Where keens the wind to, old mother?
I drop my nets, my son, my son, to catch
tomorrow's weather

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EVAN S. CONNELL

THE BEAU MONDE OF MRS. BRIDGE

PARKING

The black Lincoln that Mr. Bridge gave her on her 47th birthday was a size too long and she drove it as cautiously as she might have driven a locomotive. People were always blowing their horns at her or turning their heads to stare when they went by. The Lincoln was set to idle too slowly and in consequence the engine sometimes died when she pulled up at an intersection, but as her husband never used the Lincoln and she herself assumed it was just one of those things about automobiles, the idling speed was never adjusted. Often she would delay a line of cars while she pressed the starter button either too long or not long enough. Knowing she was not expert she was always quite apologetic when something unfortunate happened, and did her best to keep out of everyone's way. She changed into second gear at the beginning of any hill and let herself down the far side much more slowly than necessary.

Usually she parked in a downtown garage where Mr. Bridge rented a stall for her. She had only to honk at the enormous doors, which would then trundle open, and coast on inside where an attendant would greet her by name, help her out, and then park the formidable machine. But in the country club district she parked on the street, and if there were

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diagonal stripes she did very well, but if parking was parallel she had trouble judging her distance from the curb and would have to get out and walk around to look, then get back in and try again. The Lincoln's seat was so soft and Mrs. Bridge so short that she had to sit very erect in order to see what was happening ahead of her. She drove with arms thrust forward and gloved hands tightly on the large wheel, her feet just able to depress the pedals all the way. She never had serious accidents but was often seen here and there being talked to by patrolmen. These patrolmen never did anything partly because they saw immediately that it would not do to arrest her, and partly because they could tell she was trying to do everything the way it should be done.

When parking on the street it embarrassed her to have people watch, yet there always seemed to be someone at the bus stop or lounging in a doorway with nothing to do but stare while she struggled with the wheel and started jerkily backward. Sometimes, however, there would be a nice man who, seeing her difficulty, would come around and tip his hat and ask if he might help.

"Would you, please?" she would ask in relief, and after he opened the door she would get out and stand on the curb while he put the car in place. It was a problem to know whether he expected a tip or not. She knew that people who stood around on the streets were in need of money, still she did not want to offend anyone. Sometimes she would hesitantly ask, sometimes not, and whether the man would accept a twenty-five-cent piece or no, she would smile brightly up at him, saying, "Thank you so much," and having locked the Lincoln's doors she would be off to the shops.

MINISTER'S BOOK

If Mrs. Bridge bought a book it was almost always one of three things: a best seller she had heard of or seen advertised in all the stores, a self-improvement book, or a book by a

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Kansas City author no matter what it was about. These latter were infrequent, but now and again someone would explode on the midst of Kansas City with a Civil War history or something about old Westport Landing. Then, too, there were slender volumes of verse and essays usually printed by local publishing houses, and it was one of these that lay about the living room longer than any other book with the exception of an extremely old two-volume set of *The Brothers Karamazov* in goldpainted leather which nobody in the house had ever read and which had been purchased from an antique dealer by Mr. Bridge's brother. This set rested gravely on the mantelpiece between a pair of bronze Indian chief heads—the only gift from cousin Lulubelle Watts that Mrs. Bridge had ever been able to use—and was dusted once a week by Hazel with a peacock feather duster.

The volume that ran second to *The Brothers Karamazov* was a collection of thoughts by the local minister, Dr. Foster, a short and congenial and even jovial man with a big, handsome head capped with soft golden white hair that he allowed to grow long and which he brushed toward the top of his head to give himself another inch or so. He had written these essays over a period of several years with the idea of putting them into book form, and from time to time would allude to them, laughingly, as his memoirs. Then people would exclaim that he surely mustn't keep them to himself until he died, at which Dr. Foster, touching the speaker's arm, would laugh heartily and say, "We'll think it over, we'll think it over," and clear his throat.

At last, when he had been preaching in Kansas City for 17 years and his name was recognized, and he was always mentioned in *The Tattler* and sometimes in the city paper, a small publishing firm took these essays which he had quietly submitted to them several times before. The book came out in a black cover with a dignified grey-and-purple dust jacket which showed him smiling pensively out of his study window at dusk, hands clasped behind his back and one foot slightly forward.

The first essay began: 'I am now seated at my desk, the

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desk that has been a source of comfort and inspiration to me these many years. I see that night is falling, the shadows creeping gently across my small but (to my eyes) lovely garden, and at such times as this I often reflect on the state of Mankind.'

Mrs. Bridge read Dr. Foster's book, which he had autographed for her, and was amazed to find that he was such a reflective man, and so sensitive to the sunrise which she discovered he often got up to watch. She underlined several passages in the book that seemed to have particular meaning for her, and when it was done she was able to discuss it with her friends, who were all reading it, and she recommended it strongly to Grace Barron who at last consented to read a few pages.

With ugly, negative books about war and communists and perversion and everything else constantly flooding the counters this book came to her like an olive branch. It assured her that life was worth living after all, that she had not and was not doing anything wrong, and that people needed her. So, in the shadow of Dostoievsky, the pleasant meditations of Dr. Foster lay in various positions about the living room.

MAID FROM MADRAS

The Bridges gave a cocktail party not because they wanted to have cocktails with a mob of people, but because it was about time for them to be giving a party.. Altogether more than eighty people stood and wandered about the home which stood on a hillside and was in the style of a Loire valley chateau. Grace and Virgil Barron were there, Madge and Russ Arlen, the Heywood Duncans, Wilhelm and Susan Van Metre looking out of place, Lois and Stuart Montgomery, the Beckerle sisters in ancient beaded gowns and looking as though they had not an instant forgotten the day when Mrs. Bridge had entertained them in anklets, Noel Johnson huge and by himself because she was in bed suffering from exhaustion, Mabel Ehe trying to start serious discussions,

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Dr. and Mrs. Batchelor whose Austrian refugee guests were now domestics in Los Angeles, and even Dr. Foster, smiling tolerantly, appeared for a whisky sour and a cigarette while gently chiding several of the men about Sunday golf. There was also an auto salesman named Beachy Marsh who had arrived early in a double-breasted pin-stripe business suit instead of a tuxedo, and being embarrassed about his mistake did everything he could think of to be amusing. He was not a close friend but it had been necessary to invite him along with several others.

Mrs. Bridge rustled about the brilliantly lighted home checking steadily to see that everything was as it should be. She glanced into the bathrooms every few minutes and found that the guest towels, which resembled pastel handkerchiefs, were still immaculately overlapping one another on the rack—at evening's end only three had been disturbed—and she entered the kitchen once to recommend that the extra servant girl, hired to assist Hazel, pin shut the gap in the breast of her starched uniform.

Through the silver candelabra and miniature turkey sandwiches Mrs. Bridge went graciously smiling and chatting a moment with everyone, quietly opening windows to let out the smoke, removing wet glasses from mahogany table tops, slipping away now and then to empty the onyx ashtrays she had bought and distributed throughout the house.

Beachy Marsh got drunk. He slapped people on the shoulder, told jokes, laughed loudly, and also went around emptying the ashtrays of their magenta-colored stubs, all the while attempting to control the tips of his shirt collar which had become damp from perspiration and were rolling up into the air like horns. Following Mrs. Bridge halfway up the carpeted stairs he said hopefully, "There was a young maid from Madras, who had a magnificent ass; not rounded and pink, as you probably think—it was grey, had long ears, and ate grass."

"Oh, my word!" replied Mrs. Bridge, looking over her shoulder with a polite smile but continuing up the stairs, while the auto salesman, plucked miserably at his collar.

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LAUNDRESS IN THE REAR

Every Wednesday the laundress came, and as the bus line was several blocks distant from the Bridge home someone would almost always meet her bus in the morning. For years the laundress had been an affable old negress named Beulah Mae who was full of nutshell wisdom and who wore a red bandanna and a dress that resembled a dyed hospital gown. Mrs. Bridge was very fond of Beulah Mae, speaking of her as 'a nice old soul' and frequently giving her a little extra money or an evening dress that had begun to look dated, or perhaps some raffle tickets that she was always obliged to buy from girl scouts and various charities. But there came a day when Beulah Mae had had enough of laundering, extra gifts or no, and without saying a word to any of her clients she boarded a bus for California to live out her life on the seashore. For several weeks Mrs. Bridge was without a laundress and was obliged to take the work to an establishment, but at last she got someone else, an extremely large and doleful Swedish woman who said during the interview in the kitchen that her name was Ingrid and that for 18 years she had been a masseuse and liked it much better.

When Mrs. Bridge arrived at the bus line the first morning Ingrid saluted her mournfully and got laboriously into the front seat. This was not the custom, but such a thing was difficult to explain because Mrs. Bridge did not like to hurt anyone's feelings by making them feel inferior, so she said nothing about it and hoped that by next week some other laundress in the neighborhood would have told Ingrid.

But the next week she again got in front, and again Mrs. Bridge pretended everything was all right. However on the third morning while they were riding up Ward Parkway toward the house Mrs. Bridge said, "I was so attached to Beulah Mae. She used to have the biggest old time riding in the back seat."

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Ingrid turned a massive yellow head to look stonily at Mrs. Bridge. As they were easing into the driveway she spoke: "So you want I should sit in the back."

"Oh, Gracious! I didn't mean that," Mrs. Bridge answered, smiling up at Ingrid. "You're perfectly welcome to sit right here if you like."

Ingrid said no more about the matter and next week with the same majestic melancholy rode in the rear.

FRAYED CUFFS

Ordinarily Mrs. Bridge examined the laundry but when she had shopping to do, or a meeting, the job fell to Hazel who never paid much attention to such things as missing buttons or loose elastic. Thus it was that Mrs. Bridge discovered Douglas wearing a shirt with cuffs that were noticeably frayed.

"For Heaven's sake!" she exclaimed, taking hold of his sleeve. "Has a dog been chewing on it?"

He looked down at the threads as though he had never before seen them.

"Surely you don't intend to *wear* that shirt?"

"It looks perfectly okay to me," said Douglas.

"Just look at those cuffs! Anyone would think we're on our way to the poorhouse."

"So is it a disgrace to be poor?"

"*No!*" she cried. "But we're *not* poor!"

EQUALITY

Mrs. Bridge approved of equality. On certain occasions when she saw in the newspapers or heard over the radio that labor unions had won another victory she would think: 'Good for them!' And, as the segregational policies of the various states became more and more subject to criticism by civic groups as well as by the federal government, she would feel

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that it was about time, and she would try to understand how discrimination could persist. However strongly she felt about this she was careful about what she said because she was aware that everything she had was hers through the efforts of one person: her husband. Mr. Bridge was of the opinion that people were not equal. In his decisive manner of speaking, annoyed that she should even puzzle over such a thing, he said, "You take all the people on earth and divide up everything, and in six months everybody would have just about what they have now. What Abraham Lincoln meant was equal rights, not equal capacity."

This always seemed exactly what she was trying to point out to him, that many people did not have equal rights, but after a few minutes of discussion she would be overwhelmed by a sense of inadequacy and would begin to get confused, at which he would stare at her for a moment as though she were something in a glass box and then resume whatever he had been doing.

She invariably introduced herself to members of minority groups at whatever gathering she found herself associating with them.

"I'm India Bridge," she would say in a friendly manner, and would wish it were possible to invite the people into her home. And when, among neighborhood friends she had known for a long time and who offered no unusual ideas, the increased means of certain classes were discussed, she would say, "Isn't it nice that they can have television and automobiles and everything."

In a northern town a negro couple opened a grocery store in a white neighborhood; that night the windows were smashed and the store set afire. Newspapers published photographs of the ruined property, of two smirking policemen, and of the negro couple who had lost their entire savings. Mrs. Bridge read this story while having breakfast by herself several hours after her husband had left for work. She studied the miserable faces of the young negro and his wife. Across the newspaper the morning sun slanted warm and cheerful, in the kitchen Hazel sang hymns while peeling

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apples for a pie, all the earth as seen from her window seemed content, yet such things still came to pass. In her breakfast nook, a slice of buttered toast in hand, Mrs. Bridge felt a terrible desire. She would press these unfortunate people to her breast and tell them that she, too, knew what it meant to be hurt but that everything would turn out all right.

GLOVES

She had always done a reasonable amount of charity work along with her friends, particularly at a little store on 9th street where second-hand clothing that had been collected in drives was distributed. In this store were two rooms, in the front one a row of card tables placed together, behind which stood the charity workers who were to assist people seeking something to wear, and in the back room were several more card tables and collapsible wooden chairs where Mrs. Bridge and her fellow workers ate their lunch or relaxed when not on duty in front.

She often went down with Madge Arlen. One week they would drive to their work in the Arlen's Chrysler, the next week in Mrs. Bridge's Lincoln, and when this was the case Mrs. Bridge always drew up before the garage where her parking stall was rented. She honked, or beckoned if someone happened to be in sight, and shortly one of the attendants whose name was George would come out buttoning up his jacket and he would ride in the rear seat to the clothing store. There he would jump out and open the door for Mrs. Bridge and after that drive the Lincoln back to the garage because she did not like it left on the street in such a neighborhood.

"Can you come by for us around six, or six-fifteen-ish, George?" she would ask.

He always answered that he would be glad to, touched the visor of his cap, and drove away.

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"He seems so nice," said Mrs. Arlen as the two of them walked into their store.

"Oh, he is!" Mrs. Bridge agreed. "He's one of the nicest garage men I've ever had."

"How long have you been parking there?"

"Quite some time. We used to park at that awful place on Walnut."

"The one with the popcorn machine? Lord, isn't that the limit?"

"No, not that place. The one with the Italians. You know how my husband is about Italians. Well, that just seemed to be headquarters for them. They came in there to eat their sandwiches and listen to some opera broadcast from New York. It was just impossible. So finally Walter said, 'I'm going to change garages.' So we did."

They walked past the row of card tables piled high with soiled and sour unwashed clothing and continued into the back room where they found some early arrivals having coffee and eclairs. Mrs. Bridge and Mrs. Arlen hung up their coats and also had coffee, and then prepared for work. The reform school had sent down some boys to assist and they were put to work untying the latest sacks of used clothing and dumping them out.

By two o'clock everything was ready for the day's distribution. The doors were unlocked and the first of the poor entered and approached the counter behind which stood Mrs. Bridge and two others with encouraging smiles, all three of them wearing gloves.

ROBBERY AT HEYWOOD DUNCANS

The Bridges were almost robbed while attending a cocktail party at the Heywood Duncans'. Shortly after ten o'clock, just as she was taking an anchovy cracker from the buffet table, four men appeared in the doorway with revolvers and wearing plastic noses attached to horn-rimmed glasses for

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disguise. One of them said, "All right, everybody. This is a stick-up!" Another of the men—Mrs. Bridge afterwards described him to the police as not having worn a necktie—got up on the piano bench and from there stepped up on top of the piano itself where he pointed his gun at different people. At first everybody thought it was a joke, but it wasn't because the robbers made them all line up facing the wall with their hands above their heads. One of them ran upstairs and came down with his arms full of fur coats and purses while two others started around the room pulling billfolds out of the men's pockets and drawing rings from the ladies' fingers. Before they had gotten to either Mr. or Mrs. Bridge, who were lined up between Dr. Foster and the Arlens, something frightened them and the one standing on the piano called out in an ugly voice, "Who's got the keys to that blue Cadillac out front?"

At this Mrs. Ralph Porter screamed, "Don't you tell him, Ralph!"

But the bandits took Mr. Porter's keys anyway and after telling them all not to move for thirty minutes they ran out the porch door.

It was written up on the front page of the newspaper, with pictures on page eight, including a close-up of the scratched piano. Mrs. Bridge, reading the story in the breakfast room next morning after her husband had gone to work, was surprised to learn that Stuart Montgomery had been carrying just $2.14 and that Mrs. Noel Johnson's ring had been zircon.

FOLLOW ME HOME

How the scare actually started no one knew, although several women, one of whom was a fairly close friend of Madge Arlen, claimed they knew the name of someone who had been assaulted not far from Ward Parkway. Some thought it had happened near the Plaza, others thought

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farther south, but they were generally agreed that it had happened late at night. The story was that a certain lady of a well-known family had been driving home alone and when she had slowed down for an intersection a man had leaped up from behind some shrubbery and had wrenched open the door. Whether the attack had been consummated or not the story did not say, the important part was that there had been a man and he had leaped up and wrenched open the door. There was nothing in the paper about it, nor in *The Tattler* which did not print anything unpleasant, and the date of the assault could not be determined for some reason, only that it had been on a dark night not too long ago.

When this story had gotten about none of the matrons wished to drive anywhere alone after sundown. As it so happened they were often obliged to go to a cocktail party or a dinner by themselves because their husbands were working late at the office, but they went full of anxiety, with the car doors locked. It also became customary for the husband-host to get his automobile out of the garage at the end of an evening and then to follow the unescorted matrons back to their homes. Thus there could be seen processions of cars driving cautiously and rather like funerals across the boulevards of the country club residential district.

So Mrs. Bridge came home on those evenings when her husband did not get back from the office in time, or when he was too tired and preferred to lie in bed reading vacation advertisements. At her driveway the procession would halt, engines idling, while she drove into the garage and came back out along the driveway so as to be constantly visible, and entered by the front door. Having unlocked it she would step inside, switch on the hall lights, and call to her husband, "I'm home!" Then, after he had made a noise of some kind in reply, she would flicker the lights a few times to show the friends waiting outside that she was safe, after which they would all drive off into the night.

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NEVER SPEAK TO STRANGE MEN

On a downtown street just outside a department store a man said something to her. She ignored him. But at that moment the crowd closed them in together.

"How do you do?" he said, smiling and touching his hat.

She saw that he was a man of about fifty with silvery hair and rather satanic ears.

His face became red and he laughed awkwardly. "I'm Gladys Schmidt's husband."

"Oh, for Heaven's sake!" Mrs. Bridge exclaimed. "I didn't recognize you."

CONRAD

While idly dusting the bookcase one morning she paused to read the titles and saw an old red-gold volume of Conrad that had stood untouched for years. She could not think how it happened to be there. Taking it down she looked at the flyleaf and found: *Ex Libris* Thomas Bridge.

She remembered then that they had inherited some books and charts upon the death of her husband's brother, an odd man who had married a night club entertainer and later died of a heart attack in Mexico.

Having nothing to do that morning she began to turn the brittle, yellowed pages and slowly became fascinated. After standing beside the bookcase for about ten minutes she wandered, still reading, into the living room where she sat down and did not look up from the book until Hazel came in to announce lunch. In the midst of one of the stories she came upon a passage that had once been underlined, apparently by Tom Bridge, which remarked that some people go skimming over the years of existence to sink gently into a placid grave, ignorant of life to the last, without ever having been made to see all it may contain. She brooded over this

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fragment even while reading further, and finally turned back to it again, and was staring at the carpet with a bemused expression when Hazel entered.

Mrs. Bridge put the book on the mantel for she intended to read more of this perceptive man, but during the afternoon Hazel automatically put Conrad back on the shelf and Mrs. Bridge did not think of him again.

VOTING

She had never gone into politics the way some women did who were able to speak with masculine inflections about such affairs as farm surplus and foreign subsidies. She always listened attentively when these things came up at luncheons or circle meetings; she felt her lack of knowledge and wanted to know more, and did intend to buckle down to some serious studying. But so many things kept popping up that it was difficult to get started, and then too she did not know exactly how one began to learn. At times she would start to question her husband but he refused to say much to her, and so she would not press the matter because after all there was not much she herself could accomplish.

This was how she defended herself to Mabel Ehe after having incautiously let slip the information that her husband told her what to vote for.

Mabel Ehe was flat as an adolescent but much more sinewy. Her figure was like a bud that had never managed to open. She wore tweed coats and cropped hair and frequently stood with hands thrust deep into her side pockets as if she were a man. She spoke short positive sentences, sometimes throwing back her head to laugh with a sound that reminded people of a dry reed splintering. She had many bitter observations in regard to capitalism, relating stories she had heard from unquestionable sources about women dying in childbirth because they could not afford the high cost of proper hospitalization or even the cost of insurance plans.

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"If I ever have a child—" she was fond of beginning, and would then tear into medical fees.

She demanded of Mrs. Bridge: "Don't you have a mind of your own? Great Scott, woman, you're an adult. Speak out! We've been emancipated." Ominously she began rocking back and forth from her heels to her toes, hands clasped behind her back while she frowned at the carpet of the Auxiliary clubhouse.

"You're right," Mrs. Bridge apologized, discreetly avoiding the smoke Mabel Ehe blew into the space between them. "It's just so hard to know *what* to think. There's so much scandal and fraud, and I suppose the papers only print what they want us to know." She hesitated, then, "How do you make up *your* mind?"

Mabel Ehe removed the cigarette holder from her small cool lips. She considered the ceiling and then the carpet, as though debating on how to answer such a naïve question, and finally suggested that Mrs. Bridge might begin to grasp the fundamentals by a deliberate reading of certain books, which she jotted down on the margin of a tally card. Mrs. Bridge had not heard of any of these books except one and this was because its author was being investigated, but she decided to read it anyway.

There was a waiting list for it at the public library but she got it at a rental library and settled down to go through it with the deliberation that Mabel Ehe had advised. The author's name was Zokoloff, which certainly sounded threatening, and to be sure the first chapter was about bribery in the circuit courts. When Mrs. Bridge had gotten far enough along that she felt capable of speaking about it she left it quite boldly on the hall table, however Mr. Bridge did not even notice it until the third evening. He thinned his nostrils, read the first paragraph, grunted once, and dropped it back onto the hall table. This was disappointing. In fact, now that there was no danger involved, she had trouble finishing the book. She thought it would be better in a magazine digest, but at last she did get through and returned it to the rental library, saying to the owner, "I can't honestly

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say I agree with it all but he's certainly well informed."

Certain arguments of Zokoloff remained with her and she found that the longer she thought about them the more penetrating and logical they became; surely it *was* time, as he insisted, for a change in government. She decided to vote liberal at the next election, and as time for it approached she became filled with such enthusiasm and anxiety that she wanted very much to discuss government with her husband. She began to feel confident that she could persuade him to change his note also. It was all so clear to her, there was really no mystery to politics. However when she challenged him to discussion he did not seem especially interested, in fact he did not answer. He was watching a television acrobat stand on his thumb in a bottle and only glanced across at her for an instant with an annoyed expression. She let it go until the following evening when television was over, and this time, he looked at her curiously, quite intently, as if probing her mind, and then all at once he snorted.

She really intended to force a discussion on election eve. She was going to quote from the book of Zokoloff. But he came home so late, so tired, that she had not the heart to upset him. She concluded it would be best to let him vote as he always had, and she would do as she herself wished, still upon getting to the polls, which were conveniently located in the country club shopping district, she became doubtful and a little uneasy. And when the moment finally came she pulled the lever recording her wish for the world to remain as it was.

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THE GILT GIRL

The gilt girl said, And when we got to bed,
he starts in pawing. And he never stops.
And nothing happens. Are you drunk? or gay?
I said, and then I went back to the bar
and got this other guy. The empty streets
whispered of stone and hallways, faded rooms
no dark would deepen. Later on, we heard
the cops' cool whistles and the angry guns:
Three silent boys called on the guy next door,
and left his body lying on the floor.

The gilt girl screamed, My brain is made of ash!
My life's a clock that carrousels the hours
in rocket tempo. Fast and fast
I whip to foam or ferment. I'm the paste,
chromium-packed, that was your mango tree.
Say love, I give you gash; say death,
it's murder—sex, I know the rules.
I blossom in a final purity:
the total zero consummate as ash,
the gilt girl said. Yet knew her words
no dreadful night created.
No sheltering blackout, underground defense,
or shape of jungle-frond
for us to crawl, ape-like, behind.
There are no shadows here. This is no night,
primeval or belated.
Bright, bleached, white-hot, bled-white,
brilliant as gilt, our age lies bare
to anarchies of reeling suns,
the ultimate brazen glare.

—Helen Neville

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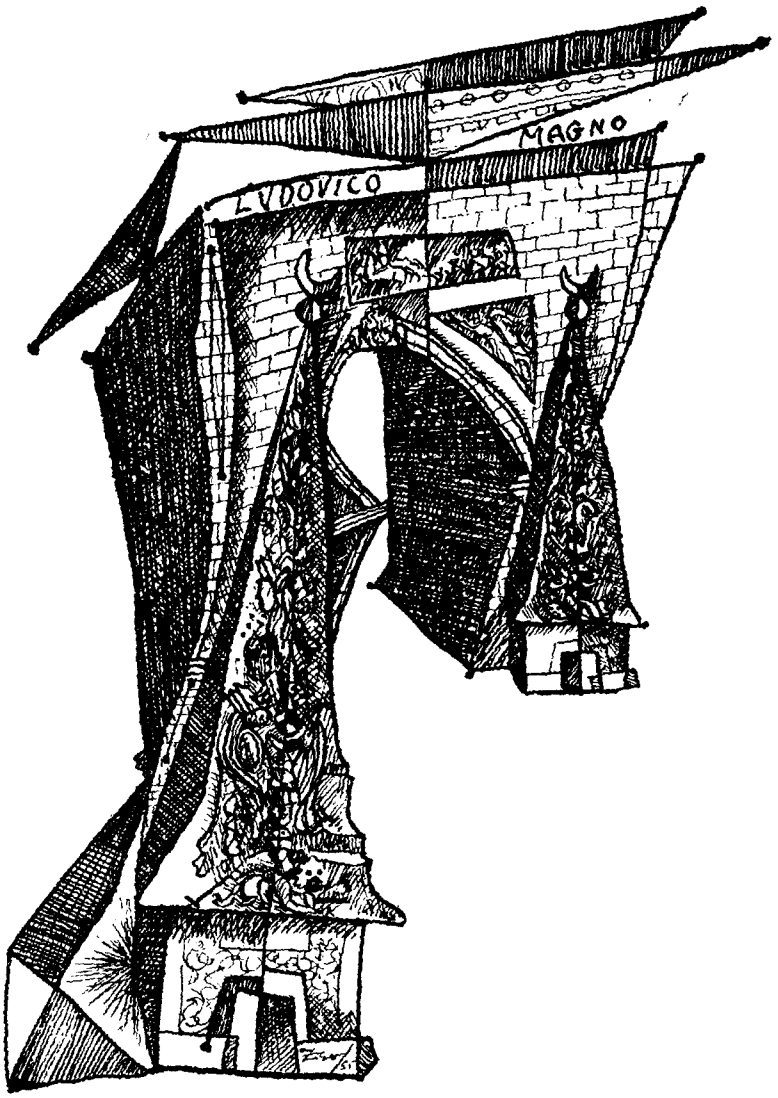

Saint-Denis

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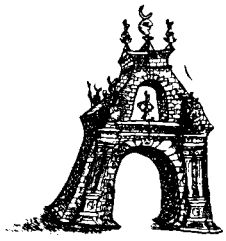

rches of Paris

by Zev

with a note on Zev by Henry Miller

THE first time I met Zev, who was then Dan Harris and may still be, for all I know, the conversation suddenly veered round to old and new souls. That Zev was an "old soul" I had recognized immediately. But what I wasn't prepared for (then) was the revelation he made me to the effect that this would be his last incarnation on this planet. Since that day, and I've thought about it often because I think about *him* often, I've come to the conclusion that there may be truth in this astounding assertion.

I mention the subject because the first thing I was aware of in his presence was this—that he was in the service of

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humanity. Perhaps I ought not to add the word "humanity". Just service, *tout court.* If it were a tree, a flower, an animal, a statue in need of aid, Zev would be the first to run to the rescue. Only very old souls possess this gift.

And so, before we say anything about the painter, we must speak of the man, the person, the strange human being who passes as Zev but who is probably one of the "*lamed-vov*".

In the outskirts of Monterey, in one of those woe-begone districts aptly described as "*terrain vague*", Dan Harris began building himself a home. The lot he had bought was anything but vast and the view, which was included free, left nothing to the imagination. But in this strange neck of the woods there gradually took shape a house which was absolutely unique and which, as we gradually discovered, was only the kernel or nucleus of more ramified structures, including citadels, temples, pagodas, fortresses, and so on, which, when reduced to scale, would give the illusion of an enchanted palace. The work proceeded millimetre by millimetre, it seemed, with one wall always missing. But what was finished was striking, even if it represented only the corner of a kitchen. Life went on just as comfortably as inside a bird cage. Whoever came to visit fell under the spell of the imaginary ensemble. What was unfinished was just as real as what was finished.

And this is another aspect, or dimension, of Zev. Zev the dreamer, Zev the planner, Zev the executioner. When he lays tile or mosaic, he embeds in it the whole history of tile and mosaic. I have never known him to accept money for anything he did. But what is more, and quite unheard of—especially among artists—he often asks if *you* need money, or if not money, food, clothing, anything at all.

I shall never forget the cradle he made for my infant son, Tony. Nothing like it was ever seen before—on land or sea. Not even the piano which he made us a gift of, and which he had painted inside and out with the most gorgeous stripes, the most fantastic figures, the most outlandish hues. Like the cradle, the piano existed in its own right. It made no difference if it was used or not: it was there, and whenever

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you looked at it you heard music, divine music, music such as Steppenwolf heard when Herman Hesse gave him an injection.

And then there is that "picture book", as he modestly calls it: *Christopher Crescent.* Still unfinished, I understand, but already as solid and tangible as the wing of a cathedral. When you look at a page of *Christopher Crescent* you lose yourself in dream. A series of drawings, which tells its own tale: the tale of the pencil or pen, the tale an implement would tell if the artist only had the courage to let it speak for itself. Zev has that courage. He holds the pencil and it draws him on, farther and farther into the labyrinth. The Minotaur is still invisible, but Zev knows no fear. And when he finds him he will not put a moustache on him!

The truth is, if we are to speak about the painter, that he is still in quest of what might be called earthly experience. He paints as he eats, breathes, sleeps. He was born with a pencil and brush in his hand. He was painting masterpieces before he ever touched a piece of paper or canvas. "No more masterpieces!" he said to himself on awaking one morning. "Just plain Zev!"

But who and what is Zev? He looked at the glass of milk he was about to drink. Wasn't that Zev too? And what was the moon? And who made it, if not Zev? This is the humility and ubiquitousness of Zev, that he recognizes nothing but the radiance and reflections of his own bright spirit everywhere. It is the exact opposite of solipsism. This is the last boat ride around the planetary sea. Sailing homeward, Zev is taking his last look at everything which greets the eye. He finds everything good, everything palatable, everything nourishing. If you can look at things, or taste them, or hear them speak, why not paint them too? Take them along to limbo just as they are, for do they not all belong to Nirvana? Are they not all in process of becoming?

I hope I arrive before the colors have faded away. I hope I shall have the privilege of visiting this eternal museum of Zev's. It would be too cruel to wake up and find that Zev had skipped—*avec tout le bazaar.*

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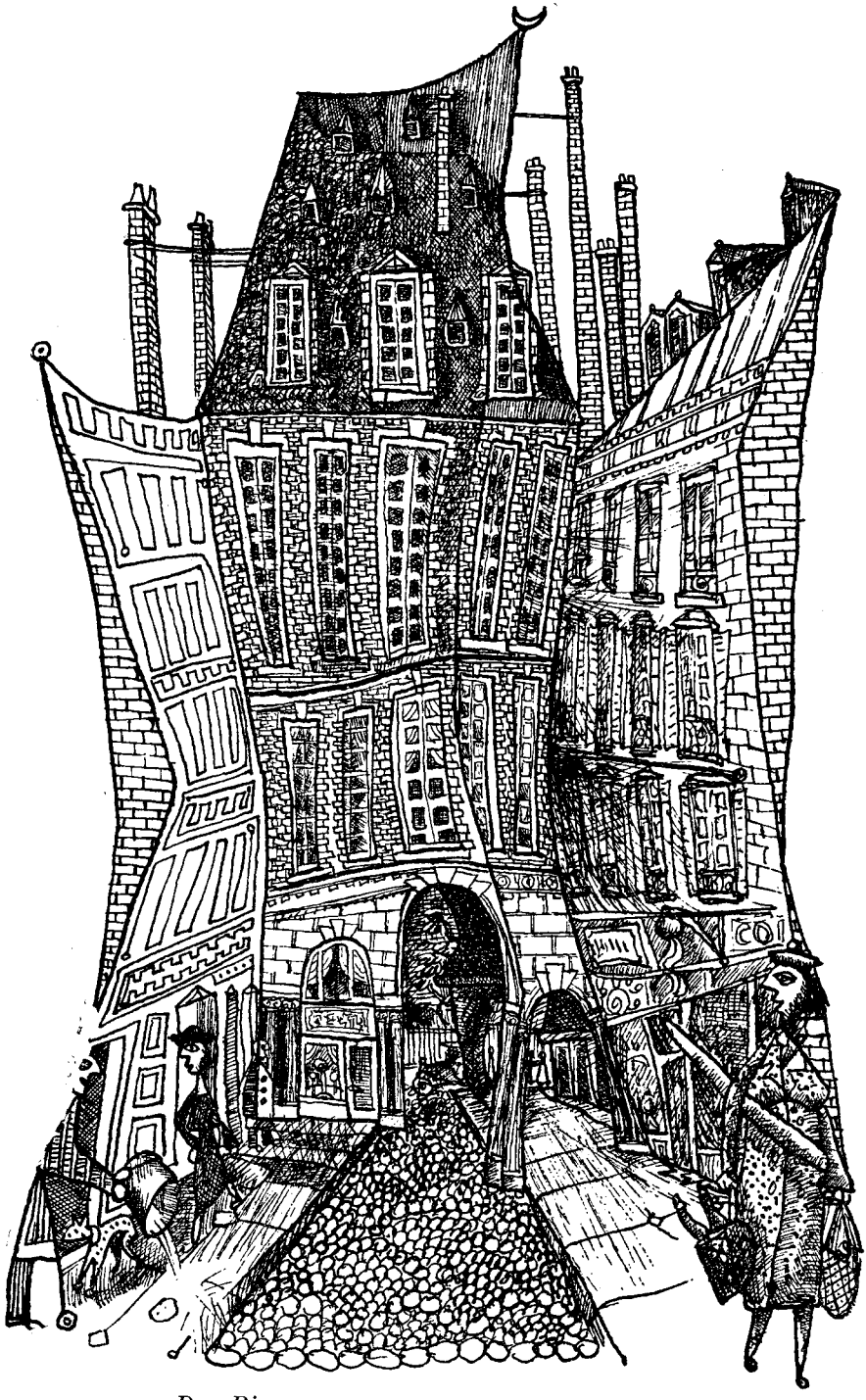

Rue Birague

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Place des Pyramides

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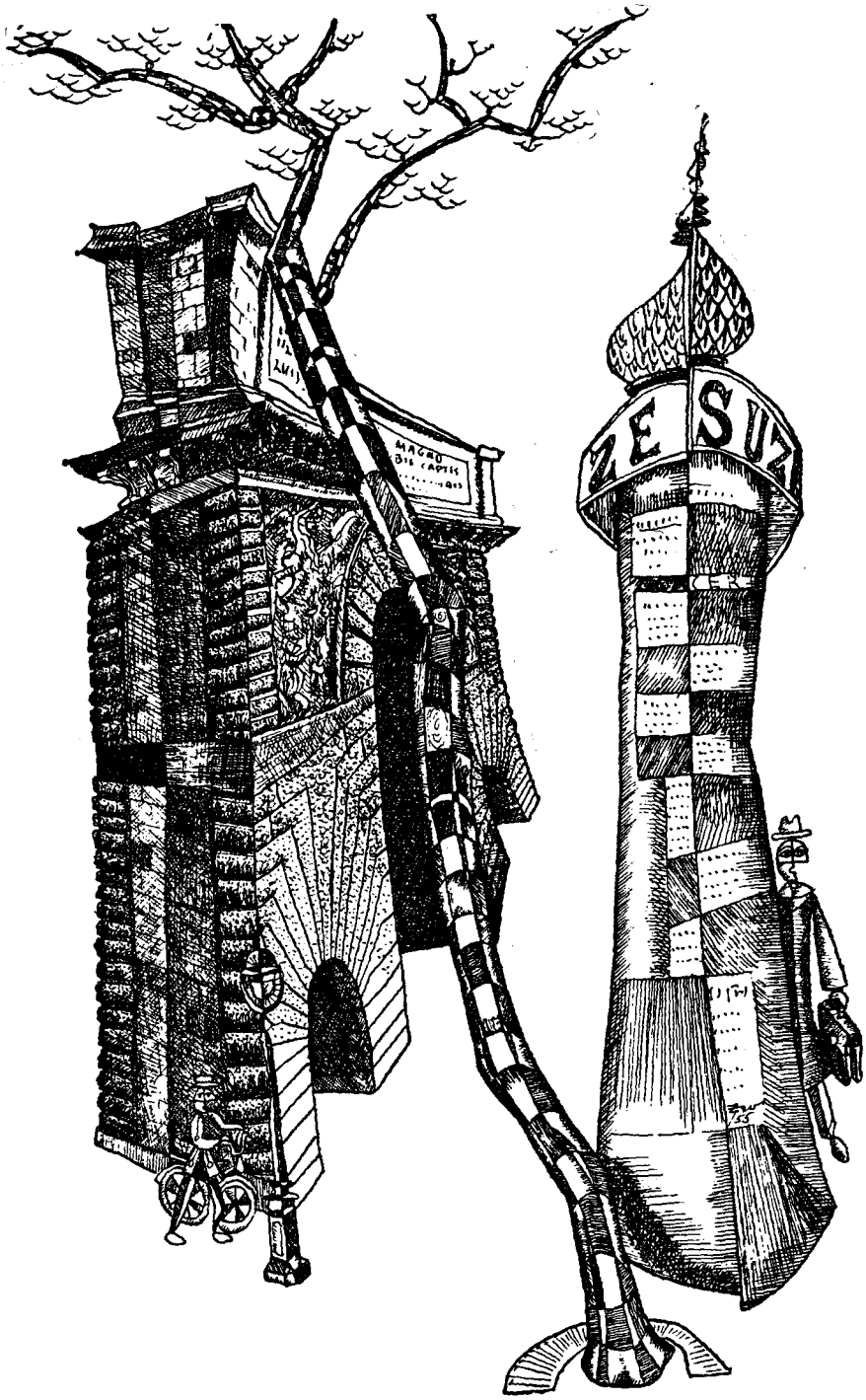

Porte Saint-Martin

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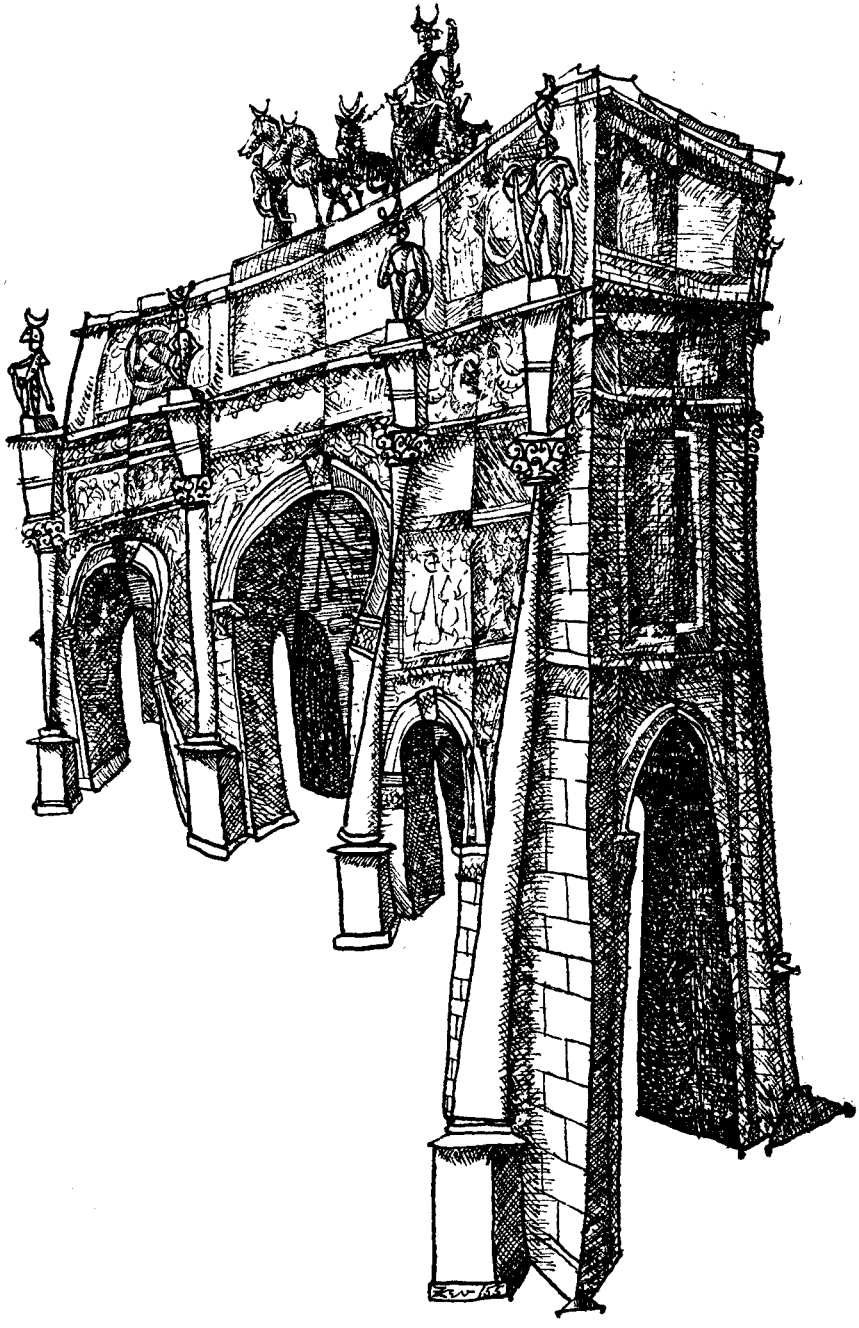

Arc de Triomphe du Carrousel

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Avenue Daumesnil

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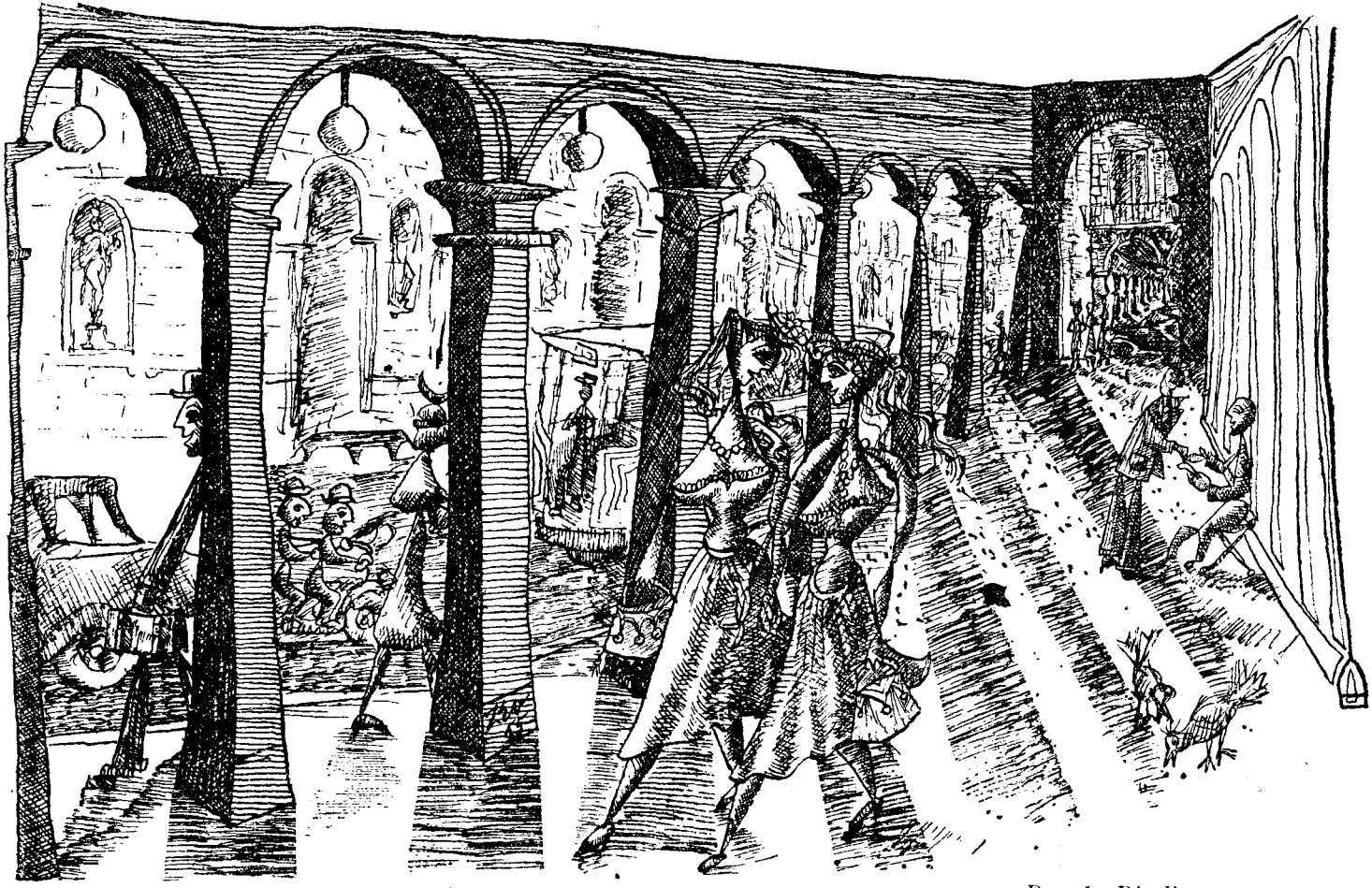

Rue de Rivoli

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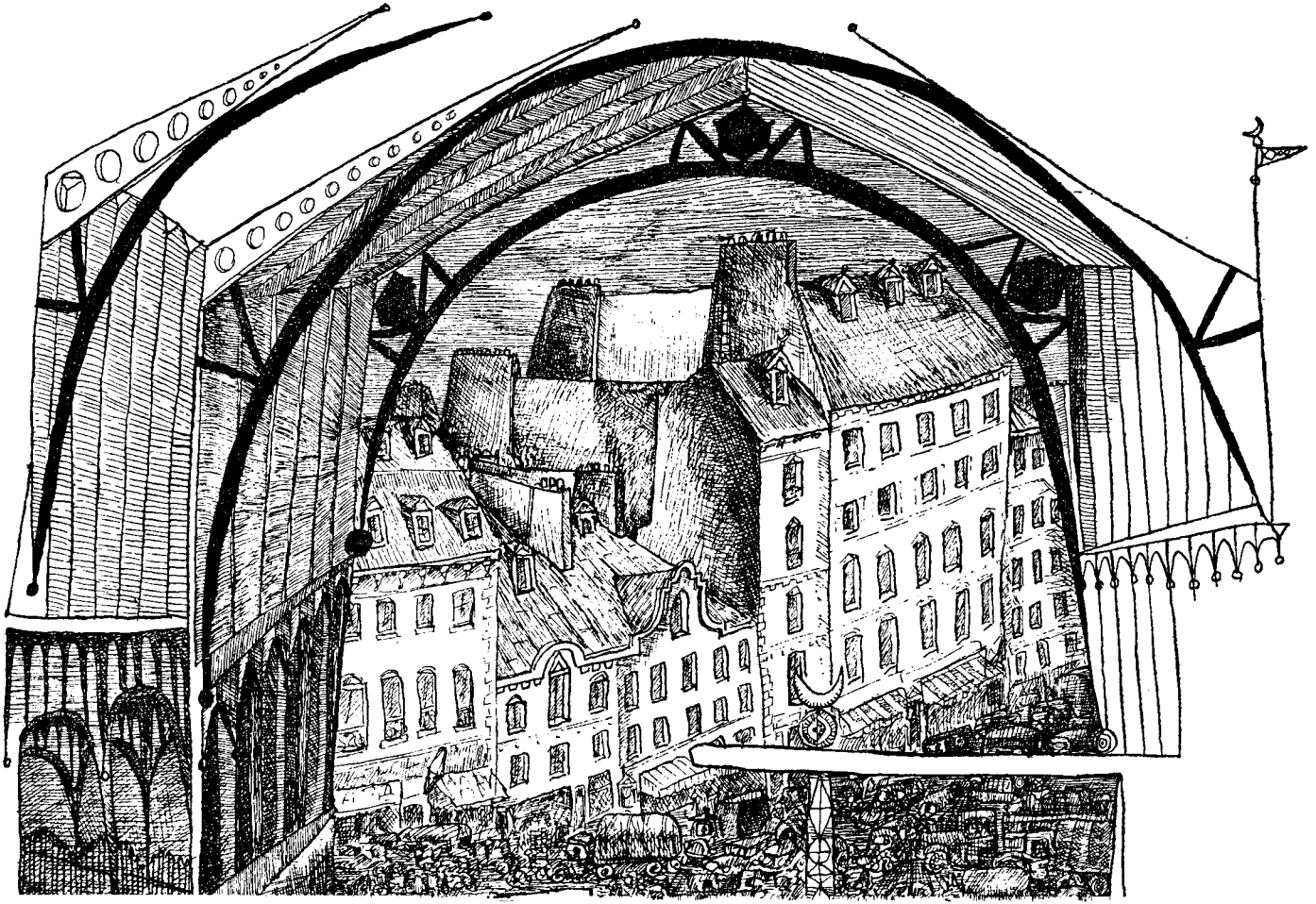

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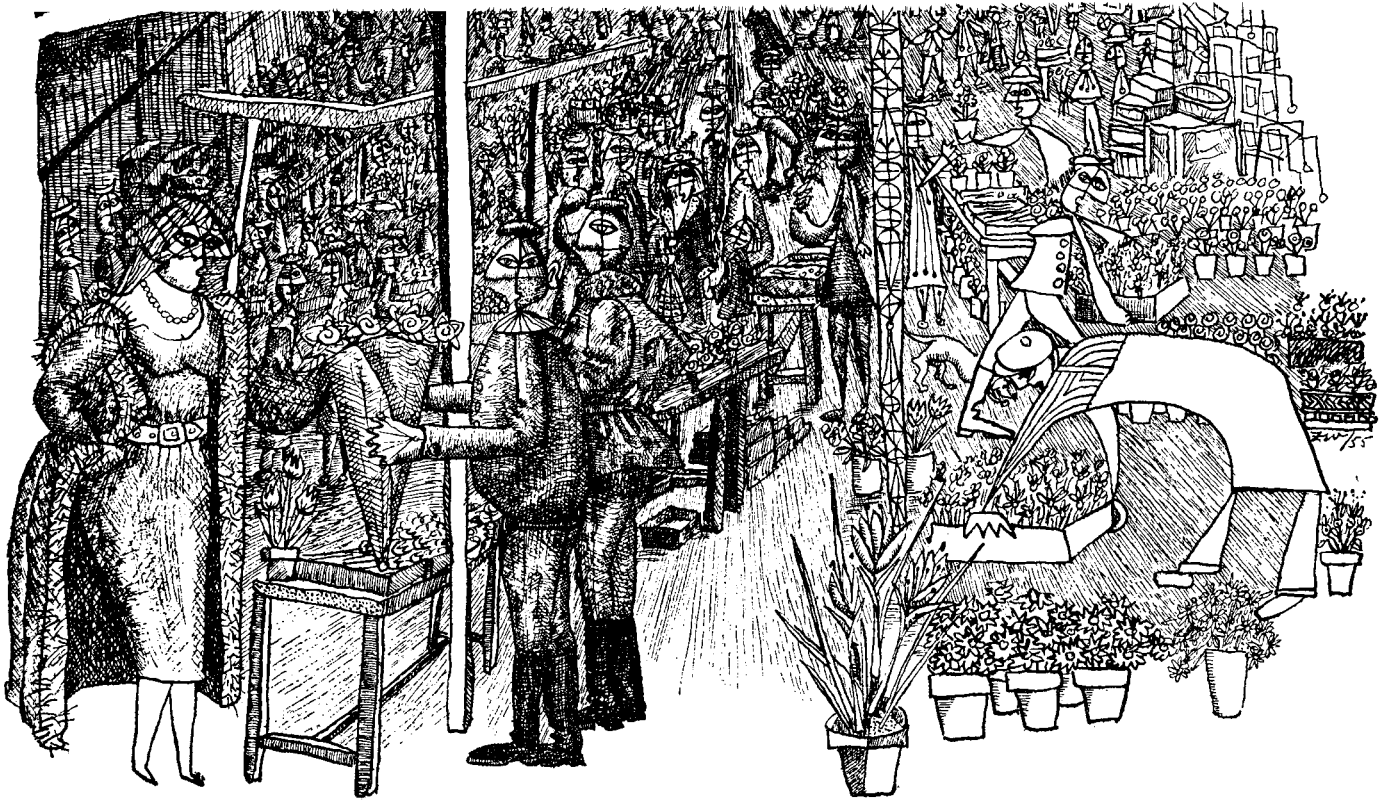

Les Halles

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TO A FRIEND CONDEMNED TO PRISON

Long I have seen those eyes,
Alert, astonished, bright,
Turn softly and survey
The girl in the falling light,
Or see down lucid skies
Soft bodies shift away.

Now, in the peopled dark,
Where hands make love to stone,
The shimmering vision falls,
The flesh lies down alone.
Only the mind hangs stark
Above the curving walls.

Hold to the mind, and die!—
Is all I say or know.
Yet you, embracing grief,
Father its children now
Forgiving, proud, you lie
With murderer, pervert, thief:

Nothing to do but keep
The body beaten down,
The clothing clean and frayed.
Nothing to do but drown
The blood in its own sleep,
And bid the heart lie dead.

—James Wright

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ZYGMUNT HAUPT

MADRIGAL

ANUSIA, Anusieczka, Anusienieczka, my, was she—wasn't she an enchantment! I was afraid to say it to myself, I wouldn't do it. It happened once that I spied her as she moved to the window, and her skirt spread out like a flag, like a fold of the chiton of Nike of Samothrace, and she set her foot on the floor as if it were of marble. It happened that her hair shadowed her temples and her eyelashes lay on her cheeks, and when she raised her eyes you thought of dappled shadows swiftly passing.

And her arms up to her elbows were as innocent as a child's. In those hands, anything she held assumed a separate happiness, even if it were something trivial and unimportant. Anything she touched with her hands was at once dear. Those hands seemed separate from the rest of her.

Once, I remember, we were sitting on the Stryj river beach, an absurd little township beach, the tiny strip of sand tracing human footprints and the grass growing in clumps and the wild bed of the Stryj shallow here, half up to your calf, farther away deep, this incredible home swimming hole, with polished stones and gravel and willow bushes and grass trodden down along the path that leads to this spot. And the congregation of bathers here, it is comical and there are none of the conveniences of the usual bathing places; here are all of the amusing types of the local population, and the teen-age Jewish girls parade in preposterous bathing suits, your eyes ache from the play of colors. You change your clothes in the bushes, which seems appropriate on the Stryj.

My Anusia scatters over me, lying on the beach, the sand

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from her rosy palms as if from an hourglass, and buries me in this white sand. When I am lying down, I look up from below at her kneeling on the sand, her thighs at the bend of her knees solid and hard, her knees white-stained where the skin is stretched hard, and her bathing suit tight on her belly, and there is a charming deep place between her breasts as a promise, and she laughs when she turns her head aside from the flying sand, her cheek curves to her chin, and her hair, most negligently tied up, whips the nape of her neck.

I feel myself by her side so squalid and commonplace that my blood rises to my face; I ponder over the fact that everyone can see how I don't fit in with this at all, I am astonished at my own impudence that I exist beside her, I should like to prop myself to repair my self-esteem. I say to myself, so that is it, and don't bother and don't let yourself down, it is a matter of coincidence that all this gathered in her came out in these girlish, womanish, maidenly proportions, it just turned out so, and as to the matter of hair, it's because the sunrays break into a thousand colors. And the thighs, you know how it is with women, how they are upholstered with fat like upholsterer's work, so don't let yourself down.

And Anusia is shedding sand and where it falls there grows a little mound, a cone trivial and quick, not lasting, but there are more of them and they cover my knees and I feel them under my armpits, buried in the sandy mounds.

This makes me uneasy and I would like to defend myself—some kind of, what's the word, what do they call it?—instinct asks me to bristle against it suddenly. Because when I get too much "involved", when I go to it, when, damn it, it gets into my veins, then what afterwards? where will I be? where will I roll my giddied head when crisis and change come, when no more dimples are in her smile, when the miraculous hands of the child will tear at my diaphragm, will tear it out, dragging out the guts and liver and in the end my heart. Beware of Anusia!

And Anusia laughs, you can see her molars, and she does not suspect the blasphemy and troubles ahead. All the same, unsuspecting as Anusia always is, she is right, as usual.

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Whence comes all this now, now when it is different, here with sun and water, and she laughs—whence comes, then, this excursion, this journey into the probable, different, unreal, dreadful. As everything with her is magnificent, so this is also. So it makes me more conscious of how I do not belong with her, how I am thick-headed, over-wise, and not worthy of her. Then comes once more the raging, strange humiliating feeling—how I am not worthy of her.

And sometimes it seems to me again that it is I who is worth more, even for this, that I can understand more, that I am more universal. Because Anusia is regional, regional with her womanishness. This sounds like a paradox, but it is true in spite of all her gifts, in spite of her unsurpassable brightness, fantastic cleverness, her ability for fitting into any situation. She always has her response ready and or the point, and I, as if choked I am chewing my bitterness, to rage, or joy's breaking in my hands and I am sitting sulking and I don't know how to say it, and Anusia shoots with one word only, bursts with laughter, blooms with smiles.

But she is so one-sided, with all her femininity. There is in it something very limited, something rounded up, till I am bumping my head as if against a wall when I reach this narrowness. She is coiling round like a serpent, like a hoop, she emerges from herself, it irritates me. She is like the divine heifer Io who tramples and treads, astride the whole of Dorica and the Ionic sea, shapely and cowlike, tender and limited, Io from over the meadows, from over the brooks.

And here she is, limited because she cannot understand me, she isn't able to, she even isn't able to guess, she is always the same. And that's why all this will probably end and I will regret, oh how I will be regretful, but she will not be sorry, because that is in a different dimension.

And how to grasp, how to catch my Io, when she runs away and she showers me in her flight with a hail of hooks and eyes, with snappers, powderpuffs, with the corks of her little bottles of eau de Cologne. How to stop her when she slips from my hands, wet with womanish perspiration which smells of verbena and glistens softly. Where to hold her

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when she faints in my hands and her hair gets into my eyes and mouth. What to give her, how to treat her to make her change when she is vanishing like the caterpillar, camouflaged in mimicry, imitating the background, lilac leaves, honeysuckle, soot and haphasardly shattered glass.

She prays, and I envy her her indifference in praying, this kind of self-centeredness which makes it seem as if she prays to herself.

She tells and she doesn't tell the truth, even if what she says, what chokes her would be the truest truth, it will not be the truth, the truth is too easy to be the truth when expressed, so it would be too difficult, and how easy, how easy to think that it is the truth. The truth is difficult, almost unpronounceable.

She laughs and her laugh is like the wound-up music-box. She laughs mechanically because something inside her is tickling and somersaulting, but if I had the courage to stop myself, if I had the courage to look straight at her, to force her with my gaze, she would redden with a blush.

That's why everything between us is real and in reality is on quicksand. Like the sand which she sows from her palms and buries me in. That's why we fit to each other like a shape and what surrounds the shape.

When we go to play tennis, what a spree is our tennis playing, on the little court in the shadow of homely horse-chestnut trees. I am a little taken aback by my innocent snobbery, by my disabilities, the pretentious paraphanalia of fashionable tennis shoes and Slaessenger's tennis rackets; but Anusia is not ashamed, she imposes the style. Anusieczka—when she bends to tie her shoelaces—her skirt tightly shapes her and the blood runs to her face. Afterwards, she is smashing with temperament and she will run to the ricocheting tennis ball, she will return it and she will burst out laughing. Even if I am a bad player, sometimes I can hit the ball in such a way that my mademoiselle will stretch her full length on the court, and she will miss it and I have the enormous satisfaction that I forced her, like a rape on her, rosy in the full sun, till I hold my breath.

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It is grand and glorious and so private on the rectangle of the court separated from the world with its nets, you forget everything, the world remains on the other side, and we two together and nothing else, and nobody else, this is closed in the geometrical rectangle and we only alone and only alone and the other things as if severed with a knife. This is artificial isolation but coincidentally it helps and gives a satisfaction. Any time I was with her I had such small satisfying situations. When the sky was fair, with her it seemed more brilliant. When I was thirsty, the beer with her tasted twice as good. Such she was, Anusia.

Afterwards we are tired and we sit together on the bench in the corner of the court, and still we are lucky: there are no players and our rectangular world belongs to us. I am rubbing my eye, that's why we stopped playing, because Anusia—how she did hit me in the eye with the ball, I saw all the stars and it ached tremendously for a while. It was so painful that I hadn't time to be cross with myself—what clumsiness to pose myself in the court unforgivably exactly in the way of the ball. She ran up to the net at once, gasping with terror, with a blush of fear, and to quiet her I smiled acidly at her, pretending that it was nothing.

Now we sit, I am rubbing my eye, it is really nothing. Anusia is scratching the ground with the heel of her shoe, she bends her head, and I can see her nape and shoulders.

She falls into thought, knits her brows, and suddenly it strikes me: WHAT IS SHE THINKING ABOUT?... And I say to myself, this is of no importance. Now I see her here and there, we are together, and then she isn't by my side, she goes away because she has her maiden's affairs, because there are a thousand more trifling daily affairs, and when she comes to me she comes only for me and then she is with me and the other things are of no importance. A kind of fairy who at appointed times appears, emerges from the swamps, and, with her, the swamps in this comparison, the water is the inarticulated world of minuscule, trifling, but unavoidable affairs. And I am ashamed that this really big question of what she is thinking isn't really of

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importance to me. I am ashamed because it seems to reveal the unimportance of all this. Now I reduce Anusia, this miracle, this spectacle full of fantasy and grandeur, I am reducing it with my indifference to the role, to the scheme of a mechanical device so that when it is in order I will not be concerned; there she is such as she is, everything in her is ship-shape, the intelligence as efficient as in a calculating machine, the reactions proper and ringing like an automaton's, where everything is perfectly oiled—that is she all over. Sometimes she emanates charming naiveté—this is swell, all right, because this is the best, when she will wonder or burst out laughing, this is O. K.! this is she, unique.

Sometimes I wonder what she is, who she is, who is Anusia. When did I see her for the first time, before we made acquaintance; maybe it was *en passant*, maybe at the railway station, damn it, I cannot remember when I saw her for the first time; probably what struck me first was a shape or the fragment of shape which touched me in a normal way; maybe it was the shape of her legs when she stood astride her bicycle and her neckerchief slid down her shoulders and the curl of her hair. Very normal then, you are a man and you are touched by some aspect of femininity. And afterwards of course everything in her was so composed and compact. And afterwards, when I made her acquaintance, probably with the assistance of the gingerhaired girl who was her friend, then I was face to face with the bend of her head and, naturally, this famous pair of hands smeared with innocence up to her elbows.

Probably she said something very pertinent and amusing, maybe it was witty, maybe stupid, maybe she said that she was late for dinner, or maybe it wasn't trivial, maybe, without scheme or forethought, she said something so compact and exact that a man would turn round to see, what the devil, who suggested it to her.

Then we went to have a drink. She would prop her foot on the railing of the bar and before she drank her glass of vodka she would look at you with half-closed eyes, or smile, friendly and exact, while in a rage with myself and much

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concerned I was calculating my ability to treat at the night club this very evening.

Or she, who never sang, on some occasion very sure of herself, sang something in a clear voice, which in its correctness was almost colorless ; she sang something from a country song, not from our part of the country but from the Miechôw.

What was she doing now, she wasn't from the category of—what's the word—easygoing girls.

So I peer at her, not to see her in fragments, so I peer to see her as a whole. I will never be able to see her whole.

Can anyone see anything as a whole, as complete? Always the fragment, always this clockwork assembly of the whole in small fragments. Maybe it is my fault.

I have mentioned that once she sang something with a very clear voice, something from a country song, but it doesn't mean that she had anything in common with these everyday girlish apanages. She had nothing of all that, nor of the banale coquetry of flappers, nor this sort of thing—girls gathering in huddles or walking hand in hand as girls do, or throwing things down to run to the ringing telephone, peculiar flight from the moment through mechanical impulse, nor shrewdness, nor the irritated condition of maidens, nor fright and retirement, nor easygoing flirtatiousness. It was something else with her, to the point that it seemed colorless; but that sounds like a paradox because Anusia was at once like the rustling of streamers and like deliverance.

Try to outline her, to make her in filagree, try to shape her image like plastic clay in your hands, there is no full impression. That's because it was probably I and it seemed that it was she. Sometimes I have the temptation to close my eyes, which I do not trust, and like a blind man grope over the features of her face to know her really, to learn her; I think that verified in touch she would be more genuine, "touchable", I would know that she is. Sometimes, instead of listening to her voice, I would like to pose my hand on her throat, on the thorax, as the mute do, to feel the throb of her thorax and to catch her voice and hold it like a shy dove,

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though this seems a little disgusting, to hold my hand on her thorax, on the living harpsichord.

An idiot's day.

My Anusia is like an amusement park. Everything with her turns round and bursts with laughter, everything is flags, streamers and ruffles. Everywhere is interesting, but that drags us already somewhere else, because there the placards on the fence are flapping, there the electric bulbs glitter like a necklace, there the dancers thump on the stage boards, there we go into the shade of a tent where they tell our future from the crystal ball, from the palm of the hand, and from coffee grounds. But here we are back in the open and everything is praised and everywhere we are invited by laughter and the tirli-tirli of the band. My Anusia is at once a clowness and an acrobat in tights and a ballad strummed sentimentally in the shade of the horse chestnut tree. My Anusia is also the panopticon of freaks, when you have the courage to look into her—the woman with the beard, the she-gorilla, the anaconda, three hundred pound of live weight because she weighs terribly on my breast, she hangs on my neck like a mill stone), a tattooed monster, a freak, Madame Viola and the lady lion-tamer.

Once in an amusement park I saw an idiot. An idiot, an imbecile, a half-wit is easily recognisable by his low, frowning forehead, his close-cropped hair, his mongoloidal swollen features, his neglected but clean attire, his hunched back, and most of all by his self-satisfied, sly, idiotic smile. This hydrocephalus was perambulating through our fantastic world with a satisfaction that was obviously mixed with distrust and full of suspicion. His solicitous foster-parents had supplied him, their pupil and pet, with some pocket money, and there he was, plodding round amidst the whirling amusements with the cautious choice and forethought of a Philistine. He rode round once on the merry-go-round, he treated himself to a colored soft drink, he stopped at the roulette wheel; in spite of his idiotic dignity and pompousness he let himself be carried by the miniature train through

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tunnels and over bridges and he even carefully brushed his trousers knees after his ride on the moving steps. All this time he was cunningly smiling to himself while he lapped the cream of pleasure from the top, amidst the whirling, playing, twittering, chirping crowd of children, alone, idiotically, suspiciously smiling, with no troubles, without convulsions and hysterics, full of joy.

Now when I am circling round Anusia's amusement park, when I am remembering the folly, music bells, drums, pipes, lutes, songs, rattles, trumpets, sirens, confetti, fireworks, Chinese lanterns of her amusement park, it seems to me that I trod amidst all this with the damned charm and the hunched shoulderblades of an idiot. It seems to me that I feel still the marks, imprinted forever, of my idiotic, sly, wise, "clever" smile of an idiot.

So it was always with Anusia, she was always the same and I was changing constantly. One time I was making an idiot of myself, the other an impotent, the third Borotra, all the time fitting myself to her like the hunchback to the wall. Damned kind of transvesticism.

And while she was carrying herself round with her unique, genial womanhood, maidenness, exact, I tried to fit her to different measures. It was "at the samovar sits my Masha" and for a change "smart as a whip" and "springtime" and the commie girl from the streets of the Cracow suburb, a rabbi's daughter. It wasn't working out, it didn't fit. When I think about it now, when I force myself, I am really trying to make it out. At once I am invaded by a crowd of ready-made, fabricated, artificial comparisons, parallels and stamped-out circumnarratios. What I will not think will crawl out with "infantilism" or the picked-up eyelashes of Greta Garbo or "Mr. Chairman"... at the gathering of the Catholic Youth organization "Odrodzenie."

And now, when I am wise after the damage, I don't know either. Maybe it was the impact of the belated period of adolescence that made it seem odd—here I am I, there is a girl. I am in here and there is something peculiar, untranslatable (that's like our ancestors in Poland, creating the

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Polish language; they didn't know how to classify it, so they were placing it, this age, in the neuter; they were saying for a girl "it"; but whence this neuter ? the girl is a girl. What held them back, what kind of restraint ? What kind of restraint had I myself so deeply?)

Once a strange thing happened. I was at home, not in my rooms, but in those of a friend, in the same house one flight up. My windows looked to the back of the house, but those of his rooms faced the street, very high in the attic of the house, and to see the street itself you had to lean out dangerously from the window sill. My friend was out, but it was a custom that I could go into his flat whenever I liked.

So there I was and I heard in the silence of the house the bell ringing in my flat. Each tenant had his separate bell. So, to spare myself stepping down, I leaned out of the window to see who it was. It was Anusia.

I didn't expect her at that moment and it was a very pleasant surprise to see her at my door. Leaning out in my precarious position, I was trembling with the feeling of fulfilled desire. And nothing. I wasn't able to detach myself from the window sill. It was easy enough to run down and to throw the door open. It was sufficient to call her from up there, "Anusiaaaa!" and let her know where I was. And I—stupid, high up, as if clandestinely peeping, shamelessly and luciously, as if to steal a glimpse of Susanna in the bath. What a pitiful comparison; what was to be seen—her hat which I did not know and her gloved hand on the electric bell button.

It lasted a short while. Then very quietly she turned from the door and she went slowly in the direction of the streetcar stop. I had seen her from above when she was treading very slowly close to the curb; her head was as if bent, but it was difficult to judge from high up. She was perfectly indifferent. She was going, not turning her head back to the door. I tried very hastily to guess what she was thinking about. What was she thinking about? There was something strange in her, something familiar and close, but

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what was it? What was she thinking about? And what was she like at this moment? And suddenly it struck me that maybe it wasn't she. There was nothing like her in the usual way. Usually when she was walking it was like meeting a revelation, or the joy of meeting, or the eighth wonder of the world. As if anywhere she turned, she turned headlights like a motor car in the night. What was she like? And suddenly it was like a disclosure, that it was I, myself. Now this is I who always walks awkwardly close to the curb, irritating thus the accidental companion of my stroll. Now this is I who is not expected by anyone, everybody can see that when I walk I am not expected.

I think to call, it sat the last moment, in spite of the rush in the street she can easily hear me. It would be enough to call "Anuuusiaaa!" and she would turn round, regained and the only one. Leaning on the window sill I look at her track. She paces along the curb, she passes the streetlamp post and close again to the curb. Now I can see that her head is bent. There is still time to run down and along the street. But I am looking at her track, as if I am at the back of myself, treading in my aimless way. Hurry up! there is still time. It is all very well to say it, but these are only words. What is hurry up? What does it mean, there is still time?

I come back from the window, I pace the stupid, indifferent rooms and I don't know what. I ask myself what is it? Everything in her was so full of fantasy, maidenish, womanish, purposeful, and what's happened? Am I cheating myself, what was it?

What was it?

After a good while I almost killed myself flying down the stairs. The street was empty. Still I ran to the next block and nothing.

It was the end of the story. By the way, there was still an episode, an affair, a miserable one and what a shame! This friend of hers, the gingerhaired girl rang me up: "For goodness sake go and see her, she may do something to herself..." So I, not much concerned but rather driven by

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the nervous appeal of the gingerhaired one, went by streetcar to her flat, where she was living alone. I rang the bell, no answer, so I went through the courtyard, she was living on the ground floor and there was the door to the kitchen which was never locked. I ran through the kitchen and the hall. She wasn't in the big drawing room, the doors from the bedroom were closed, locked? I pushed them only once and they flew open; they weren't secured with the latch.

My Anusia had pushed the dressing table into the middle of the room and swaying on top of it was trying to tie her silk stocking to the hook in the middle of the ceiling. I took her from the table and seated her in an armchair. Everything in me rose up in my throat, I wasn't able to utter a single word, I was afraid I would throw up. And Anusia thawed completely, and, sniffling with her nose, she cried bitter tears upon my shirt collar, she cried and cried and I didn't know what to do with this situation. I felt disgusted and odd and pitying and frightened at what could happen and I couldn't help laughing also at her silk stocking; but all this was quite superficial.

All this was the end, but once more, to save appearances, we arranged one scene. It was in the restaurant on the second floor of Lindenberg's Snack-Bar, where we had made our date. Unhappily it was after the time of serving luncheons and they were dissatisfied with us; they served only lunches there and they didn't encourage us much. I ordered a beer for myself; they gave it to me on a cardboard coaster, and Anusia said:

"May I have a demi-tasse?"

But they ignored her wish; I drank some of my beer; it was bitter; Anusia, of all possibilities, addressed me by the formal "Sir".

"Won't you order me a demi-tasse?"

I am saying, Anusia, Anusieczka, this is impossible, it is some abysmal misunderstanding, I don't know what to invent, so I call it an abysmal misunderstanding.

"Some coffee, please, for me."

I would like to tell her, do you remember? But what? I

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am ashamed. Will I remind her of the time when she buried me in the sand on the beach at Stryj?... That we had such a time together...? All this was, it isn't any more now...? now we sit on the second floor of the Lindenberg Snack-Bar; I wear a new made-to-order suit from Lopatkowski, fashionable, and I am ashamed of my new attire; it seems to me like a robe which they used to put on the condemned led to the "auto-da-fe".

"Is it impossible to get a demi-tasse of coffee in here?"

Suddenly in my head the thought whirled, exploded—this is for the last time, it cannot be undone, unwound, and the awful regret, and what? and maybe the most idiotic case of being used to things I will only miss the scheme and the ticking of the same artificially colored passion.

So it was when we saw each other for the last time, on the second floor of Lindenberg's Snack-Bar, when I left her alone, not finishing my beer, when at last they brought her the demi-tasse, when I wore my new, fashionable suit from Lopatkowski's Establishment, when I rose up and awkwardly and strangely took my leave, and we never have seen each other again.

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THE TREE

Long ago I found a seed,
And kept it in a glass of water,
And half forgot my dim intent
Until I saw it start to reach
For life with one blind, fragile root.
And then I pressed it into earth
And saw its tendrils seek the air,
So slowly that I hardly knew
Of any change till it had grown
A stalk, a leaf; and seemed to be
No more a thing in need of me,
But living by some sapience
I had not given, could not withdraw.
So it grew on, and days went by,
And seasons with their common gifts,
Till at the leafage of the year
I felt the sun cut off from me
By something thick outside my room—
Not yet a tree grown to the full,
Yet so endowed with need and will
It took the warmth and left me cold.
And first I climbed with hook and shears
To prune the boughs that darkened me,
But the tree was stubborner than I,
And where I clipped it grew again,
Brutal in purpose as a weed.
Nor did it give of fruit or flower,
Though seasons brought their common gifts,
And years went by. It only grew
Darker and denser to my view,
Taking whatever I would yield—
The homage of a troubled mind—
Requiring nothing, yet accepting
My willingness to guard its life
By the endurance of my own.
It gives me nothing: yet I see
Sometimes in dreams my enemy
Hanged by the hair upon that tree.

—Adrienne Cecile Rich

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ECLOGUE

THE property must belong to someone: I come upon berry patches and fruit trees in the general wildness, and tracks of cattle in the boggy grass by a stream, but there are no fences and the last farmhouse I passed was a mile away.

The ground mounts gradually, a mosaic of sun and shade, up slabs of rock, over tuffets of moss; the sky is a steady blue; the wind barely breathes in the treetops; only a sleepy chirp or a rustle, now and then, filters from above. There is such a spell of green-gold stillness on the afternoon that I, too, move without sound.

With sneaking steps I go up the shallow staircase of rocks and enter one of the many doorways of the trees. I do not feel like a trespasser, but like a belonger to the place, as if I had once grown here long ago, as a bush or tree, or been one of these dark, inscrutable stones inbedded in the hillside.

I come to a flat green spot full in the sunlight. I undress entirely, and stretch out, my cheek on a pad of moss, my body pressed into the warm, pricking grass. Beneath me I feel knobs of stones and spines of tree-roots, the earth's skeleton under its supple flesh. The sun a great gold brush, comes down on my back, and a ground breeze whisks over me softly. I feel myself being woven back into the fabric and contour of nature. It seems I can hear, under my ear, ants dancing, the foreheads of worms pushing, and the seeds of all growth

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gnawing upward through the sod. My hand, flung out, touches the smooth, ringed trunk of a birch, its skin as white as mine. Should any human being pass, it seems to me, I would not be noticed where I lie. My clothes are a disguise I have abandoned, and my nakedness is suitable and comfortable as bark to a tree, as his well-fitting hide to an animal. Face down, hugging the earth, I am secure, invisible, sunk in the landscape.

When my back is saturated with sun, I turn over. And now I absorb a new sensation: Gaping, roofless blue above me, my body white as a fallen statue in the open green, I am all at once vulnerable, exposed. So an animal must feel, forced upon its back, its grip with the earth broken, its soft underparts bare to attack. But when caressed or scratched on these parts, of which the nerve-tendrils are so sensitive, the animal relaxes in a kind of ecstasy; and this I do as the sun repossesses me with its burnishing stroke.

The strong light weights my eyelids, and I close them. I am suspended in a great copper sphere, whose dome turns first to yellow—the color of dying daffodils—then green, the green of an old album cover of stiff plush that I remember from earliest childhood—then blue, metallic and flashing as the neck-feathers of a loon—and, at last, a soft and secret purple, the folds of a king's robe in an ancient painting once brooded over in some lower recess of childhood. If I lift my eyelids a splinter, the dome springs to grinning orange—a lion's mouth, a furnace doorway, an upside-down abyss of pure frightening light.

The sun now wraps me, layer over layer, with such heat that I lose consciousness of my body's weight and shape; I am formless, transparent, afloat. Invading every pore, the sun seems to reach my veins, thickening my blood, almost halting it. Closing the cups of my eyes, I let the purple light eclipse to black. I am again sealed from sight, an object colored and textured with its background. Solid now, heavy as a magnet into which a myriad particles of power have gathered, I settle to the bottom of the sphere. I am dimly aware, during a long enthralled doze, of the sun's slow

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glide around its arc, and later, of scarves of shade being drawn, one by one, over my body.

When I awake it is to coolness, a thinning of the air, a hollowness in the still-blue sky, while the foliage around me has become denser where shadows have massed between the leaves. There is a listening mood to the wood now; birds utter one-syllable cries and make quick swoops in the upper branches where the sun is still yellow. I awake to the sound of grass being cropped and the slow, meandering stump of cattle, out of sight a little way beyond the clearing. I can hear the animals swish their tails, the wet crunch of their methodical jaws, but cannot see them yet.

I lie still, my hands under my neck, letting the scene around me return. I see red berries, dried by the sun to puckered pellets on a wild currant bush, the embroidery of unfurling ferns at my side. A grasshopper, green and shaped like a peapod, makes a long leap from a fern and lands on my chest. He rocks up and down with my breathing, and when I blow on him he shoots away, drowned from sight in the tangle of the grass.

Now there appears the low-slung, munching head of a cow through a gap in the bushes. I hear others following after. Her loose, fawn-colored neck-skin stops swaying under her chin when her glossy, dark eyes fall upon me. She wags one ear forward, then the other, her black, slime-wet nostrils sucking clues of scent from the air. When I do not move, she steps closer, her lashes brushing down over mournful pupils, and the others behind her take an imitative step, bringing them into view. The herd of ten or a dozen gradually clusters into the clearing until they are standing in a respectful semicircle, all gazing at the motionless white object on the grass. None ventures an exploratory gesture until their leader gives the signal by moving first. The grass is juicy and lush here. I am probably lying in the delectable center of their cropping ground. Will they advance and threaten me, realizing their superiority in strength and number, or will my human status (naked, prone and passive though I am) ward them off to look for other pasture?

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I am too immersed in my conviction of belonging to be afraid of these slow-moving, tranquil-breathing creatures who hesitate above me; yet they do look large and heavy there, weaponed (are they aware of it?) with sharp horns and hoofs. I see my little image reflected in each pair of stuporous, non-committal pupils, but I decide to stay motionless. The leader takes two steps forward; the others imitate, keeping the semicircle intact. And two more steps. Their heads do not sink to sample the grass; the white object lying there is a fascination greater than food.

What can they want of me? A strange emotion, more awe than fear, keeps me lying rigid. Haven't they recognized me as a human, then? Without my clothes, do they no longer sense me as man, but as some creature they have never encountered, and whose meaning must be discovered?

Yes, it must be so, for the leader takes another step, carefully, and lowers her head. With her gray, rough shoe-shaped tongue she licks my toe. Am I really becoming part of the woods, and is it recognition of my metamorphosis that attracts her? The others stand waiting for her judgment. She raises her head and looks around at them, running her tongue over the bridge between her nostrils as if sampling the taste of me, considering its quality. The herd is alert and waiting, but her communication must have been one of puzzlement; they do not advance. White and green saliva slides from the corners of the lead cow's lips as she stares at me expectantly, wishfully.

It does not occur to me to say a word, or make a gesture of self-identification. I find I am flattered by their interest, intrigued by speculation as to how I appear to them. The smell of the farmer in his sweaty overalls, pitchfork in hand, they know; the laconic command in his voice, his calloused, impersonal palms relieving their udders in the stalls at morning and nightfall, the unconscious contact of his forehead with their flanks as the two hard jets of milk cross each other squealing into the pail. They are accustomed to the vegetable and mineral smells of the forest, their summer domain, and all season nothing has disturbed their day-long green routine

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of aimless meandering, mindless munching, their eyes reflecting nothing but the sky's serenity, the stillness of their drinking pool. And today they come upon an ambiguous white object in the sun on the grass, with an undefinable smell and shape. Is it alive? Scarcely. And yet, is it not breathing? But it does not assert itself; it cannot be human. Vegetable, rock, beast? No. What then?

Or, perhaps they have recognized me as human—the lick at my toe confirmed it—and awareness of my helplessness is dawning on them, being signaled this minute to the others by the enterprising leader as she lobs her thick, hair-frilled ears back and forth, and the sun glints wickedly on the white points of her horns. I feel all at once how it would be if their blunt, split hoofs stamped on my belly. No, it cannot be. Their eyes are too wide and meek, they are too hesitant —no flicker of fury in their faces.

Maybe it is love, then, the cows all feel for me? Their leader has sensed my repentence of the human state, my retreat from the sin that was the first thought, my return to animal grace after the long betrayal, before the tempation to mentality seized a natural creature and raised him arroggantly on his hindlegs. Maybe they are welcoming me back among them to the wisdom, the peace and beauty of existence outside the cage of thought, and maybe the lick on my toe was a tentative caress, a sign of recognition and forgiveness.

So, I still keep silent and motionless. And the fawn-colored leader steps closer, and this time licks my knee, and goes on licking, confident now, absorbed. An eagerness like hunger has come over her. Her tongue at first is pleasant-feeling, but soon rasps like a file; her forelegs with their knobby, grass-stained knees are planted solidly at my side. And her tongue moves up my leg, wide, hot, full of friction.

Oh, why have I let them get near me? I cannot hope to push her away with my puny legs and arms. And now the others have arrived, their heads lowered determinedly all around me. Three of them begin, with heavy, drooling tongues, to lick my feet. I will be licked from head to heel, slobbered over ; I am their strange delicacy to be rolled over

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and over in the grass, pushed this way and that by their many avid tongues.

And now it comes to me what it is they believe me to be, or what wishfully they would make of me: a slab of salt, discovered on this miraculous day in their hilly meadow! It was not here yesterday, but it is here today, a gift of mankind or of nature.

Their warm, eager, snuffling breaths descend upon my sweating skin. My tardy panic is so intense that I am paralyzed. I want to draw up my knees, spring erect, and run. But all I can do is raise an arm, and say a husky "Shoo!"

At my motion, the old leader's head jerks up; she backs away as if stung in the forehead by a bullet. The other cows start, and fall back instantly. Brimming with their own panic now, they bound away, crashing through the brush, staggering into each other, and they stop only when their leader does, beyond the low bush wall. From there they fearfully look around at me over tremulous hind-quarters and agitated tails.

I sit up with a thrill of power. They stumble down the hill. I stand up, and begin to dress. At sight of my head and shoulders they move together defensively into a clump on the path. They recognize me now. There is an injured balky frown between the eyes of the leader. The rest are sullen and comatose. They look as if they expect me to pick a switch and herd them home.

I take an opposite direction, turning my back on them, forcing myself to a moderate pace, although my feet want to hurry. The back of my neck is still cool with fear, and my knees loose. Why? I wonder, since it has turned out that I am the power and the danger, not they. They have already forgotten their fright; they are back to munching; while I must settle this turmoil in my stomach before it will consider supper.

At the same time, my chest is warm with a strong, brandy-like pride. Because to them I am an apparition, a thing outside their ken, a being with hands that can seize and use

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objects, a stick, a rope, to dominate them; a thing that operates by thought, the brutes retreating as from something supernatural.

Evening has moved in now over the ground, filling the spaces between the boulders and under all the bushes with thick, furry shadow. That tree with the bronze leaves ahead—is it a beech? I remember passing it on my way up, just after I left the road and entered these woods. As I get nearer to it, my footsteps unaccountably slow down. Everything looks peculiar in this light that hesitates so long on summer evenings. I am not lost. I think I know quite well where I am, and after that tree there will be the road down, where I will turn south to the farm where I am staying.

But aren't the leaves of the beech turning red, and redder as I look? Its trunk, smooth and gray between the warts of bark—is it expanding? It seems, as I stare in the uncertain light, to be breathing. When I reach it, stand next to it, touch it with my hand, what if it should *do* something, and I should then see what it really is?

I wish that it would. And I wish that that high boulder sitting in the ravine, mottled with moss so that it resembles the back of a giant toad—cold, mindless, lonely—would hear my footsteps, would relax its petrified pose, and turn toward me, revealing its true form.

Before me, the ground rippling with stripes of shadow, and above me, the sky stirred into motion by feathers of pink in the west, seem together to arch and stretch. As I pass the beech and the boulder, and walk down hill, it is as if earth and sky were shifting—as if a fold between them were smoothing out. I focus on that fold. Is it really only the sunset changing hues, or is there a cord, a sort of braid uncoiling from under the horizon—gray, then rosy, as it lengthens and thickens—passing between the earth and into... into the body of—? Some prone and immense shape filling all the distance...

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THE ANGRY MAN

HE came aboard at Loraine, Ohio, a small, thin man who despite the hundred degree August heat was dressed in a dark wool suit, with the coat buttoned, and who wore a tie, a white shirt, and a gray wool cap. Swede spotted him first.

"Look here," he said.

It was about the sixtieth time Swede had stopped work and said look here in the past ten minutes, but I looked anyway, since I didn't enjoy shoveling drop ore any more than he did, and the two of us watched the stranger come up the deck. He carried a small cardboard suitcase in one hand, a slip of paper in the other. He came to a halt in front of us and read from the paper:

"Captain James F. Stanton."

"He's up in the wheelhouse," I told him.

"The what?"

"The wheelhouse," I said, and pointed up the deck. "That white shack up there."

He looked at the wheelhouse out of eyes that were gray, flat, and hard, like pieces of chipped flint, and then folded the paper and placed it in his inside pocket. In the worn but neatly pressed and brushed suit he looked like a country man come to town for a funeral or a wedding—not like any sailor I had seen, even on the Lakes.

"You the new deckhand?" Swede asked.

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Instead of replying the stranger picked up the suitcase and started up the deck, walking with the flat-footed, slightly lurching gait of a man accustomed to spending long hours on his feet.

"Hey," Swede shouted.

The stranger stopped and looked back at us.

"If you're the new deckhand, you hadn't ought to bother the Capt'n," Swede said. "Just take your hiring slip to the First Mate. Name's Larsen. You'll likely find him in that cabin there to the starboard; the right."

"Written here I report to the master of the vessel," the stranger said evenly.

"Yeah, but that's just the hiring slip. They all say that. That don't mean—" Swede suddenly shut his mouth, picked up his shovel, and began throwing ore back into the hold; I thought he had gone crazy for a second, until I heard Larsen's voice, close by, and then I got busy with my own shovel.

"You the new deckie?" the Mate asked.

"That's right."

"Okay, give me your hiring slip and get to work with these men. You can sign the articles later, after watch."

"I'm supposed to report to the master of the vessel," the stranger said.

"No, you ain't. Just pick up a shovel and never you mind about the Capt'n." He paused. "I'm the Chief Mate," he said —and you could tell from the way he said it what the title meant to him. "You can consider you've reported to me."

The stranger said nothing.

"Are you going to get to work?"

"Soon as I've reported."

"I'll tell you one last time," the Mate said. "You've already reported—to me. Now get to work."

"This paper they gave me," said the stranger, "says I report to Captain James F. Stanton on arrival aboard the *James A. Holbrook*. I'll work for you as soon as I've done it."

"Mister," the Mate said after a minute, "you sure got a

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lot to learn. I can't remember when I met anybody with so much to learn. It'll be a pleasure teaching you. Go ahead up to the wheelhouse and report to the Capt'n. I want to make sure you're around when we cast off."

We heard them walk away.

"Goodbye stranger," Swede said. "You ain't going to be much help to us, and less to yourself."

"Now why'd he do that?" I wondered.

"I don't know why he done it," Swede said, "but I know what the Mate's going to do. I seen him do it once before, ride a man till he breaks, and I'd guess that wasn't nothing alongside what this is going to be."

I knew what Swede meant. I had heard the stories of how Larsen dealt with men who showed or seemed to show the least defiance to him—how he whipped those big enough to make it a contest and broke the others by breaking their spirit, and how, in all the stories, the rebel or accused rebel quit as soon as the *Holbrook* touched at the next port, cursing or cringing or just beat-quiet, to leave his story with the thirty cents for a shot-and-a-beer at the nearest saloon.

We worked for a quarter of an hour on the two ton load of ore the unloading crane had let fall on deck, neither of us talking, and I wondered if Larsen was really going to give the stranger the treatment. I had never seen it happen—and Cunningham, the wheelsman, said I never would. He said Larsen had been reprimanded by the Company three months before for mistreating a deckhand, and that this reprimand was all that stood between his becoming Master of his own boat. Larsen had to play it careful, he said.

"Here they come," whispered Swede.

I glanced up and saw them coming down the deck, the stranger wearing a fresh laundered chambray shirt, bib overalls, and steel toe shoes, but still with the gray cap and the cool, implacable expression that seemed to say he was long past caring for anything or anyone, the Mate included.

"You two knock off now," Larsen shouted. "This new hand is going to finish up, since he didn't get aboard till the watch was half over and didn't go to work then."

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We dropped our shovels and stepped back a pace.

"Dig in, Mister," the Mate said. "We cast off in an hour and a half, and I want this ore shoveled away and the deck swept clean before then. And I don't want any excuses, understand?"

The stranger looked calmly at him, his head tilted back since the Mate was a good ten inches taller and maybe a hundred pounds heavier. Standing there the two of them looked like a parody on the Bible School picture of David and Goliath, with David middle-aged and sinewy and Goliath's face fleshy and big-nosed and very Danish. But the stranger didn't hit him; he just picked up a shovel and dug into the ore.

I followed Swede back to the shade of the aft cabin and sat beside him on the deck. He bummed a cigarette from me and we lit up. "What'd I tell you?" he said.

"About what?"

"The Mate. He gets a kick out of it." Swede sounded like he was proud of Larsen for getting a kick out of it. "Why, there's over a ton of ore there. He'll never get it cleaned up in time. Now you're going to see it, Henry, and then your education'll be complete."

Since it was too late to go into town we went to the dining room and played rummy for a while, but I couldn't concentrate on the cards. I felt sorry for the stranger. I couldn't figure out why he had acted that way with the Mate. Was he just looking for trouble, or did he believe that the small print on the hiring slip had to be followed to the letter? Or just ignorance; probably that was it. Probably he just didn't know any better and, when he realized what he had let himself in for, would quit like the rest of them had quit. Larsen had the reputation of being the toughest Chief Mate on the Great Lakes, and I had never heard anyone challenge it. Everyone in our deck gang did what he told them to do and steered clear of him the rest of the time.

Swede beat me six games in a row, so I let Benjy, the messboy, take my place and went out on deck. As I passed the stranger I saw that he had already finished nearly half the

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pile and was still shoveling at the same steady pace with which he had begun, though now his shirt was black with sweat. I shouted hello to him, but he paid no attention to me. He went at it like a machine—scoop, up, swing, return; scoop, up, swing, return—his face calm and relaxed, as if he had expected to do such work, or worse, every day of the week, and didn't mind it a bit. I went to the forecastle, scrubbed off as much ore dust as I could reach without taking a shower, and stretched out on my bunk with a copy of Moby Dick.

Conners, the deckwatch, called me out for the four p.m. change of watch, and I followed him up the ladder to the ward-room. "That's some helper you boys got today," he said.

"Why? What'd he do?"

"Nothing much. Just that when the Mate told him to go work the cables he said wait a minute, till I finish sweeping this ore dust over the side."

"He got all that ore shoveled, did he?"

"And swept," Conners said dryly. "Anyway, you and him are supposed to help Adler. He's over at the crane now. At least, that's where he was told to be."

On deck I saw Adler showing the stranger how to swing the hooks of the hatch crane in place to connect with the steel eyes on the lids so that they could be hoisted onto the hatches. He finished as I came up, flashed me a cadaverous grin—he was tall and bony, with the long, lantern-jawed, dour face of a country preacher—and climbed up onto the crane. We hooked the first lid and moved over the open hatch.

"Got a new playmate, eh bub?" Adler shouted over the noise of the ceane. "Where's the fat one?"

"I don't know where they got Swede," I said.

Adler dropped the lid in place and we disengaged the hooks. The crane moved on. "What's your name, bub?" he asked the stranger.

The stranger said nothing.

"Guess this is your first time steamboating, eh?"

The stranger disengaged his hook and waited.

"One thing about Swede," Adler shouted as the crane

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moved on. "Talks your head off. This one's different. Well, always welcome a change, I say."

When we finished the Mate came and took the stranger off somewhere, and I got out the hose and helped Adler wash down the deck. The *Holbrook* was out of the inlet now, heading toward open water, and astern, above the gulls which still chased us, the blast furnaces turned the sky a fierce, glowing red. I lugged the hose after Adler, watching the way the water pressure made it buck in his hands as he blasted the dust and ore lumps over the side and hosed down the white-work of the cabins until they gleamed. The breeze began to get cooler, and then the whitecaps started to toss up and fold under, slapping lightly against the hull. We passed close by the galley and heard the cooks banging pots and pans around and the smell of meat frying. Then, before we knew it, the sun was gone, rimming the circle of the farthest horizon like flame, and the last pale light dimmed slowly down the sky. "That does her!" shouted Adler. We coiled the hose and stowed it and went below to wash for supper.

Swede was lying on his bunk reading a comic book when I came in. "Where's the stranger?" I asked him.

"What stranger?"

I peeled off my T-shirt and dungarees and stuffed them into the laundry bag. I picked up my towel and soap and started for the shower. "When you get done playing games, let me know," I said.

When I came back Swede was still lying there, but I ignored him, knowing he would talk about whatever was bothering him soon enough.

"Don't ask me to do him no more favors," he said finally. "Don't ask me to do nothing for that guy. I learned my lesson."

I didn't say anything.

"I told him," Swede said. "I told him what happened to the last guy who sounded off the way he did this afternoon. Trying to help him, that's all I was doing. The son of a bitch."

"Yeah? What'd he do?"

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Swede got up and threw the comic book on the bunk. He hitched his thumbs into his belt and his face got brick-red; he ran one hand through his hair and sat on the bunk again; he cracked a knuckle, loudly; but he didn't say a word. I got dressed and lit a cigarette.

"What'd he *do*?" I said again.

"*Do*?" Swede shouted at me. "He didn't *do* anything, the mangy little runt. I'd like to see him try anything with me. I'd break his neck." He worked his way through one hand, cracking each knuckle. "He just ignored me, that's all he did. Like I wasn't there. The bastard."

"Hell," I said, managing not to laugh. "Ah hell, Swede, let's go eat."

By the time we reached Sault Saint Marie two days later the crew was offering four to one, with no takers, that the stranger would quit as soon as we got to Duluth, if he didn't jump overboard before then. He hadn't slept more than eight hours in the past forty-eight. Larsen had him chipping rust and painting down under the forepoint. He spent all of his first watch down there, and when he came back to the forecastle his shirt and overalls were black with sweat and his knuckles were cracked and bleeding. He pulled off his clothes and carried the shirt—it must have been the only one he had, because he washed it each night, pressing it under the mattress while he slept—to the shower. He didn't say a word to either of us. When he came back, ten minutes later, he folded the shirt neatly, stretched out on the bunk, and closed his eyes. At that moment Larsen arrived, slamming open the door.

"You," he said.

The stranger opened his eyes, but didn't move.

"There's rust under that paint," Larsen said. "Go back down and scrape it off and this time get it clean before you paint it. We pay a day's pay for a day's work around here, Mister."

He was gone until after midnight. In the morning he was sent back to finish the job, and the next evening it was the

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same thing—except that this time Larsen didn't give him a chance to lie down. He still had not spoken to any of us except to ask for food at the table or what had to be said in the course of working. For a while the crew had a fine time laughing at him, but after a few days his silence began to irritate them—they could understand, even admire, a man who refused to kotow to authority, but when he refused to confide in them, his equals, or even to reply when they spoke to him, then it was another story.

"He's a loner," Benjy said.

"There's more to it than that," Conners insisted. "There's got to be. What's he got to gain acting that way with the Mate?"

"Might be a union organizer," someone said.

Conners laughed. "Union organizer, eh? You mean he's collecting grievances against the Mate? Is that what you mean? Well, the next time he tries to organize you, let me know."

"Hell, he don't even talk to me."

Swede cracked a knuckle. "Damn him," he said.

This was the fifth night. We had left Duluth that afternoon, and despite all expectations and beliefs the stranger was still aboard. His refusal to leave, to quit as the others had done, was all it took to make it impossible for us to ignore him. Not only had he offended the Mate, and paid for it with four days and nights of his own sweat, but now he seemed to be actually defying Larsen to force him off the boat.

"Like he got something on his mind," Benjy continued in the same softly modulated chant, sitting crouched in the galley door shelling peas into a bucket. "Don't want to talk and don't want to be talked to. Wants to be alone and don't like that, either. Like he was angry about something. Real angry."

"He ain't the angry man on this boat," Swede said.

"No," said Cunningham, "it would seem the First has that distinction." He took a long pull from the bottle he had brought aboard at Duluth, then held it up. "Anyone?"

The whisky went from hand to hand. Cunningham watch-

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ed as each man drank, his lean, intelligent face alert and calm, not at all drunk, his pale blue eyes calculating the amount that would remain. "The First had his discharge papers all drawn up," he said, took the bottle, and drank again.

"Wish I'd taken one of them bets," Adler said, and grinned at us over the rim of his coffee mug. He blew on the coffee. "Anybody here take one of them bets?"

"Wonder where he's from," somebody said.

"Ask him."

"I did."

"What'd he say?"

"Just looked at me. Didn't say nothing."

"That's him all right."

"No, he's not exactly loquacious, is he?" Cunningham said. No one replied. He smoothed his neatly trimmed blonde mustache with one finger, his calm eyes roving from face to face. "Is something the matter?"

"Nothing much," Adler said, and laughed. "Seems everybody is just a little nosey, is all."

"Who's nosey?" Conners demanded.

"Why," said Adler, "I could have sworn you were the one who was so worried because you didn't know the life history of this here stranger. But maybe I was wrong." He drank some coffee and looked around at us. "Why not leave him along awhile, boys? He'll talk, when he's ready to. Right now he's a little busy."

"Yeah, yeah," Benjy said, "I seen him shovel ore that first day. Ain't but one place where you learn to shovel like that, easy-like, like you was used to doing it all day for a number of days."

"The rock pile," Swede said. "You're talking about the rock pile, ain't you, Benjy." He laughed humorlessly. "No wonder," he said.

"That don't surprise me none," somebody nodded.

"I don't believe it," I said.

"Hell, what would you know about it," said Swede. "You're just a kid."

"Yeah, and you're King Solomon. Of Sweden."

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For the next two weeks, beneath a sun that seemed to become more violent as the days went by, the stranger performed without complaint or comment every job that Larsen could find for him to do. He spent five days flat on his back under the donkey engines, cleaning and chipping and painting, his face and body covered first with heavy grease and then with red lead. For five more he cleaned the bilge. He washed down the walls of Larsen's stateroom and polished the oak paneling until it gleamed; he cleaned toilets, collected garbage, scoured the paint lockers, and got every menial job and extra-time detail that came along. He had gotten a bad sunburn, but Larsen kept switching him from inside to outside work—with the result that he didn't tan. The skin on his face and neck and arms was always blistered. Larsen rode him night and day, made him re-do jobs already well done, punished him for ignoring small details he had never been told existed, tricked him into making mistakes and then publicly ridiculed him for making them. I never saw the stranger when he wasn't working or just getting into bed.

"Larsen's playing for keeps, all right," Adler said one day as we were entering the Soo locks. I was straddling the bosun's chair, waiting to go over the side. "I confess I don't know what the stranger's got in mind. Mate's going to work him to death, at this rate. You ready, bub?"

"Yes," I said.

Adler gave me a push and I lifted my legs clear of the rail as the boom swung out over the dock. For a moment I hung there, thirty feet in the air, holding tight to the line that ran between my legs from the board seat to the boom. The Mate leaned over to check our approach.

"Okay," he shouted. "Drop him!"

The concrete dock came up at me fast and at the last second I swung out a little to make sure I wouldn't miss it and land between the side of the boat and the lock wall; Larsen was supposed to watch to make sure that didn't happen, since Adler couldn't see the dock from where he stood working the line, but it was so much of a routine that he hardly ever bothered. I always played it safe, anyway. I had heard

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stories of men who got themselves caught between the boat and the lock wall just as the boat slammed up hard against it—and they all ended right there.

Once I was landed they hoisted the bosun's chair back and this time the stranger dropped down; but instead of watching the dock he kept his eyes on the deck until, just before he hit, he swung out of danger.

"Jesus, be careful!" I shouted.

But he walked past me without saying a word—except for the first day he still hadn't said a word to me—and we started to work the cables. There were two of them, each of inch-thick woven steel, and when we looped them over the spials on the dock the donkey engines tightened up on them, pulling the *Holbrook* slowly into the narrow lock.

"Hen-ree," Swede shouted from the deck, "did you boys have a nice con-ver-sation?"—and his face got red with laughter.

That night we did have a conversation—or as much of a conversation as I ever had with him. I had stayed in the wardroom to read after watch and around eleven the stranger came in from deck and ducked down the ladder to the forecastle. When he reappeared he carried a soap dish, a towel, and the white shirt he had worn the day he came aboard. He pulled off the chambray, unbuttoned the long-sleeved BVD's he wore underneath, and let them hang at his waist. As far as I could make out he had two sets of everything: one to wear and one to wash, and not much else. I began to wonder if he was broke, if that was why he refused to quit, but I didn't really believe it could be explained so simply.

From behind the book I studied him. He washed himself like a laborer who is used to washing in the home of a woman whose bathroom exists primarily for the sake of its own cleanliness, succeeding somehow in covering his face and neck and shoulders with water and suds and then clear water without spilling a drop on the deck. I guessed him to be around forty, maybe older. He was below medium height and so thin that there did not seem to be an ounce of extra flesh on him. His nose had been broken and there was a thin white scar down one cheek that I was sure had been caused by a knife.

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"The chair," he said, looking at me.

I was too surprised by his speaking to answer or even look at him; I turned a page and pretended to read.

"The chair," he repeated, louder. "The one on the rope. Why does the Mate always stand there?"

Finally I looked at him. "The bosun's chair?"

"That one. Why does the Mate always stand there?"

"Why," I said, "he's supposed to keep an eye on the men working the cables. To make sure they don't get caught between the boat and the dock, for one thing."

He nodded. "That's a reasonable precaution for the safety of personnel," he said, almost to himself, and began buttoning his shirt. I waited for him to say something else, and when he didn't I decided I would have to speak to him.

"Did you just get off watch?"

He nodded again.

"You know, we're supposed to work eight hour watches," I said. "The Mate has no right to make you work all day and all night, too. You ought to write the Company."

"Ha," he said—and it wasn't nearly a laugh. "I'll fix it my own way."

For a long time after he had gone I stared at the page, seeing nothing, wondering what it was about his voice that had frightened me. It was as if I had been given a warning that nobody else could hear, a final warning before an irrevocable act. But what could it be? How could he fix it? What was his own way? Did he intend to shoot the Mate? Or stab him? His voice—not what he said, but the voice itself, cold and lonely as a voice from the dead—echoed in my mind. That night, for the first time since I left home, I had trouble going to sleep. His voice made me lonely.

August ended and September was half over, but each night in the fantail the crew still talked of him, speculated on him, the voices sometimes rising to angry shouts, sometimes falling to ruminative whispers. Finally, to have at least one solid, indisputable fact about him, Conners persuaded Cunningham,

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who had access to the articles, to look up his name. When he came back that night we all looked at him, waiting.

"Illegible," he said. "Absolutely."

Conners cursed.

"There were five letters to the surname," Cunningham offered. "Beginning with what appeared to be an S."

"Likely it's Smith," somebody said.

"Whatever it is," said Swede, "you can bet it ain't his real name."

"We don't know his damned name," Conners said. "Nearly two months since he came aboard and we still don't even know his Goddamned name."

"Tell you," Benjy said from his place near the galley door. He was peeling a potato, its whiteness emerging like magic from the dark. "He's the Devil hisself, that's what! I'll slit his throat!"—and he struck out with the knife. "Drive a stake through his heart, yeah!" And he began laughing softly.

"Cut that out," Swede said.

"Might just as well be Christ himself, the way he acts," someone said.

"I'd just like to know what he's up to," Conners insisted. "What's he got to gain acting that way with the Mate? What's he doing here, anyhow? Why don't he get another berth?"

"Maybe he's just earning a living," I said. "It's hard to get a berth this time of year."

"Damn hard living, the way he's doing it," somebody said.

"Maybe," Adler said, "he figures he can outlast the Mate. Larsen's getting pretty nervous, what with spending all his time thinking up dirty jobs for that man to do and then making sure he does them."

A couple of us laughed.

"Sure, you know all about him," Swede said angrily. "How about telling us what he was doing in the pen, if you know so damned much? Huh? How about that? What was he in for?"

"You're sure he was in the penitentiary, are you?"

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"Sure enough. I don't know exactly what they got him for, either, but there's talk it was a little matter of killing a man."

"Maybe that's why he shipped out. Cops was looking for him."

Adler clicked his tongue. "Don't say? Be kind of hard for a man to get Coast Guard clearance if the police was looking for him, wouldn't it?"

"Maybe so, but if anybody could do it that man could."

"There he is now," said Cunningham, pointing with his bottle toward the bow, "the subject of your nightly myth-making."

Down the deck the stranger had appeared. He was standing at the rail looking out over the water. We were upbound in the Saint Mary's, approaching the Soo, and from the land on either side of the river came the dark scent of pines and rotting leaves and sodden river soil. Now and again through the trees we saw the lights of a farm house, like a house in a dream. Once, in the silence, we heard voices talking, close at hand but invisible in the night, and once a dog ran along the Wisconsin bank barking at us as we cruised past on the dark river. Suddenly the stranger leaned toward the bank, his silhouette clear against the white cabin bulkhead, and then he quickly turned and disappeared into the wardroom again. The ship's bell rang four times; it was mid-watch.

"He seemed yearning for something," Cunningham mused. "It was the land; it was something to do with the land. Do you suppose he could have been a farmer?"

Conners stood and spat over the rail. "Oh, to hell with him," he said. "Let's go have a little game of stud."

The next day it happened, so fast that most of us knew nothing until it was over, and then knew too much for belief. It must have been too much for Larsen, too, not knowing when or if the stranger would do it again and knowing that if and when he did his career as an officer was over. Because when we docked at Duluth he left the boat and didn't come

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back; we heard later he was Chief Mate of the *Francis House* of the Pittsburgh Line and pretty much the same as ever.

Anyway, it was a nice day—bright, cool, and clear—and most of us on the off-watch were on deck to look at the town and to admire the girls who came down on Sundays to the park that bordered on the locks to watch the boats go through.

"He's off again," somebody said.

I glanced toward the bow and saw the stranger being swung out over the dock in the bosun's chair. Swede sat on the bench near the rail, waiting his turn—we alternated Sunday watches, but the stranger got them all—and the Mate stood to one side, looking down at the lock. He gave the signal to lower away, turned, and said something to the man working the donkey engines.

"Look at that," Conners said.

I looked and saw a pretty blonde girl dressed in a blue cotton gown walking along with her hips swinging. We both whistled and she blushed just like she hadn't come down to be whistled at in the first place; and then she screamed.

"Christ, he's caught!" a voice yelled.

I leaned over the side and saw the stranger swinging gently between the side of the boat and the lock wall, sitting calmly on the bosun's chair, without moving, not shinnying up the line or calling for help, like a spider on the end of a thirty-foot web—the *Holbrook* meanwhile slamming inward with force enough to splinter a railroad tie into toothpicks. Then, moving with the fast, jerky movements of a character in an old-fashioned movie, I saw the Mate run to the line and throw his weight on it, and then the boat struck heavily against the lock, and then, when I looked again, the stranger was standing there, his hands on his hips, the same cool, implacable expression on his face.

"Why, you stupid—" the Mate said, and cursed him.

"Fact is, you wasn't watching, Mate," said the stranger.

For a moment the Mate just looked at him, his face getting redder and redder as he built up a head of steam.

"Fact is," the stranger told him, "you nearly got me killed, Mate. Carelessness, they would have called it. Negligency,

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maybe. That's enough to lose your license, Mate. I looked it up in the book."

"You did that on pur—" Larsen began, but he stopped when he saw the way the stranger was looking at him: the look a man gets in his eyes just before he pulls the trigger on an eight-point buck.

"Reasonable precaution for the safety of personnel," the stranger quoted, his head thrown back, his voice raised just a little. "Better be more careful next time, Mate. You never can tell when another accident might happen."

"Get working on them cables!" Larsen shouted, but his heart wasn't in it, and once we got through the locks he went to his stateroom and stayed there until we landed at Duluth, which was the last we ever saw of him.

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THE SALAMANDER

Classified as a modern calamity,
the salamander hibernates all winter
in the hollow of a tree
or in some other cavity.
It will not budge
until the burning hand of spring
calls it forth benevolently,
a venerable prophet
indoctrinating his meager constituency.

From the fuel to the fire; nay,
with the fuel, a part of the fuel,
to this scene of tragedy—
if the salamander does not wake
in time to defend itself heroically.
Many a log, I suspect,
stopped burning prematurely.

The salamander's lizard-like guise
is worn deceptively.
At bottom, asbestos animated
by the fiercest intensity,
it not only resists fire
but destroys it entirely.
Irritated by the spring, it knows
how to vanquish this intolerable enemy.

Winter again, a cold torpidity...
As a child, Benvenuto Cellini
beheld this monstrosity.
His well-meaning father
boxed his ear, to embed
the dreadful animal in his memory.
Then he embraced him, ambiguously
soothed the uncalled for burn—
he gave him cold coins,
the balm of money.

—SANFORD EDELSTEIN

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Fiction

EVAN S. CONNELL *(The Beau Monde of Mrs. Bridge)* has twice been published in the O. Henry Awards prize story volumes. His story, *The Fisherman From Chihuahua*, published in the seventh issue of THE PARIS REVIEW, is to be included in the volume *Best American Short Stories of* 1955.

ZYGMUNT HAUPT *(Madrigal)* was born in Eastern Poland in 1907. This is the third time his work has been published in THE PARIS REVIEW. His stories have also appeared in *Accent*, *Furioso*, and *Perspective*.

BEN MORREALE *(Hate)*, born in New York in 1924, is at present working on a doctorate thesis at the Sorbonne, while teaching at the American Community School in Paris. *Hate* is his first published story.

DONALD WINKS *(The Angry Man)* is a young American starting a career in writing in New York. *The Angry Man* is his first published story.

Interview

GEORGE A. PLIMPTON, the editor of this magazine, is the author of a children's book, *The Rabbit's Umbrella*, which is to be published by the Viking Press in September. MAX STEELE'S short stories have been published widely. His novel *Debbie* won the Harper's prize novel award.

Episode

MAY SWENSON *(Eclogue)* has had her poems and stories in *discovery*, *The New Yorker* and *Partisan Review*. Her first poetry volume was published by Scribners last fall under the title, *Another Animal*.

Portfolio

ZEV was born in Brooklyn in 1914. He has lived in Europe for the last two years. An exhibition of his paintings took place in Brussels this summer and will be shown for the first time in Paris this November at the Galerie de Furstenburg. The introductory notes to the drawings are by HENRY MILLER, the well-known author of *The Air-Conditioned Nightmare*, *The Tropic of Cancer*, and other books.

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Poetry

ELIZABETH JENNINGS *(Sequence in Venice)* has published widely in English periodicals. She won an Arts Council of Great Britain Prize for her *Poems*, published in 1953 by the Fantasy Press. More recent poems have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Encounter*, *The London Magazine*, and other publications.

HELEN NEVILLE *(The Gilt Girl)* has had poems published in *Poetry : A Magazine of Verse*, *The Nation*, *The New Republic*, and elsewhere.

SANFORD EDELSTEIN *(the Salamander)* is 25, a native New Yorker who works part-time in the Washington square Library of New York University. His poems have appeared in *Accent*, *Folder*, and other publications.

ADRIENNE CECILE RICH *(The Tree)* has had poems published in *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, and *Botteghe Oscure*. Her poems have appeared twice before in this magazine. Harpers is to publish her second book of poems, *The Diamond Cutters*, this fall.

WILFRED WATSON *((The Ballad of Mother and Son)* is at present teaching at the University of Alberta. His *Friday's Child*, a book of poems, was published this fall in England by Faber and Faber.

JAMES WRIGHT *(To a Friend Condemned in Prison)* attended Kenyon College and the University of Vienna. His poems have appeared in *Kenyon Review*, *Sewanee Review*, and *Poetry*.

Illustrations

EVAN S. CONNELL *(Hate)* is the author of *The Beau Monde of Mrs. Bridge*, published in this issue.

HARRY KELMAN *(The Angry Man)* is a Canadian artist and illustrator living in Paris. He recently exhibited in the Leicester Gallery in London. He is to have an exhibition in the Gallery Palais Royale this autumn.

CARZOU *(Cover drawing)* recently completed costumes and decors for *Athalie* at the Comedie Française. Since his last Paris show, with Venice as subject, consisted of paintings of air and water, his paintings to be shown this fall will all be be of gardens and forests, painted in France. Carzou's present projects include a set of illustrations for Julien Gracq's *The Castle of Argol*.

Le Gérant et la Directrice : COLETTE DUHAMEL.

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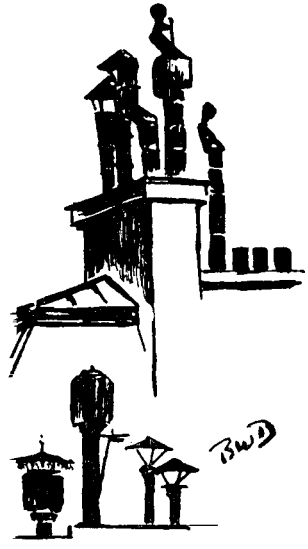

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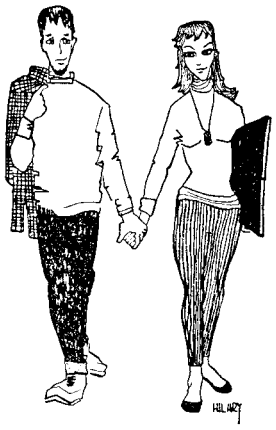

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